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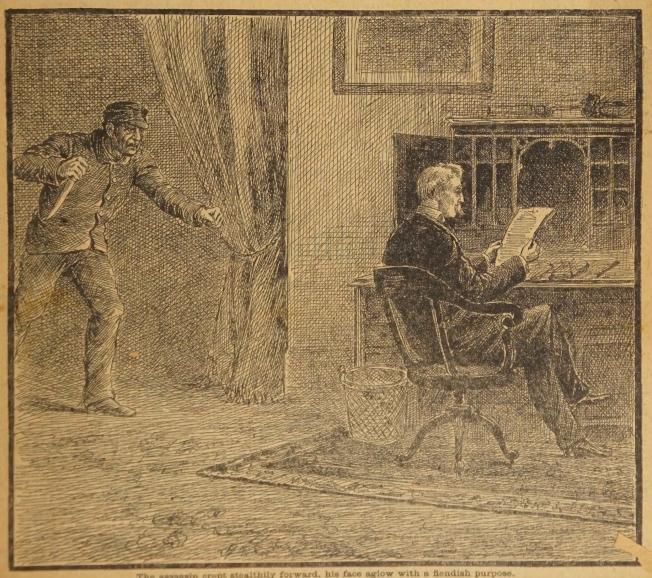
Vol. V.

Old Sleuth Library, Issued Quarterly,—By Subscription, Twenty-five Cents per Annum, Copyrighted, 1901, by George Munro's Sons.—December 21, 1901.

# DARING TOM CARY;

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# DARING TOM CARY;

-OR-

# A Farm Boy's Adventures in New York.

## BY "OLD SLEUTH."

## CHAPTER I.

" Clear the road there!"

A stalwart youth came dashing down a hill-side toward a snowand-ice-covered pond, upon the shore of which was gathered a number of boys and girls who were shouting and yelling for help and wringing their hands in helpless agony.

A glance toward the center of the pond revealed the occasion of the excitement.

The ice had given way, and a little fur tippet floating on the dark water told of a body that had gone down beneath the waters.

As the shout first went up a lad was seen rushing down the hill at full speed, and as the children saw him, some of them exclaimed:

"Here comes Cary! He'll save her!"

The command came in a positive manner, as though the speakers believed, in their child-like confidence, that Cary could do anything

Be that as it may Cary appeared to be a lad who would do or die, as with a leap he struck upon the ice and glided like lightning swiftly toward the opening, where a human head and a pair of arms had just risen above the surface.

Cary slid across the intervening space and glided into the water. Down he went like a diving duck, and in less time than it takes to tell it, he reappeared upon the surface, holding in his arms the form of a lovely girl.

Young Cary's action appeared to throw some sense into the head of some of the other boys.

The latter ran and secured a board which they slid out to Cary, and the latter managed to place the half-drowned girl upon it, and the other lads drew the board in over the ice; in a few seconds the dripping girl was carried ashore, the board was slid back again to the open space, and the gallant Cary was dragged out. The moment the latter got upon his feet he ran and caught the form of the dripping girl in his arms, and away he started up the hill and across a field, until he reached the turnpike, then away he sped down the road with a fleetness as though the burden he bore in his arms was nothing.

The gallant young rescuer appeared to know exactly what to do. He did not take the girl to her home, but ran to the village doctor's. Fortunately the latter's house was not far away from the

scene of the accident, and, again fortunately, the doctor was at home.

"Jennie fell through the ice and went under," was Cary's announcement, as he rushed with his burden right into the doctor's office.

The doctor took charge of the girl. She was speedily resuscitated, and the doctor's wife put her to bed, and word was sent to her parents, and she was made as comfortable as though the nasty ice had not broken away under her feet and let her down into the chilling waters.

The girl was cared for overnight at the doctor's and the next day returned to her own home as good as new, and, fortunately, no evil consequences followed her winter bath.

Jennie Snell fared well enough; but how was it with the gallant youth who rushed in at the peril of his own life to save hers?

At the time the accident occurred, Tom Cary was returning from an errand to the town some miles distant, and it so happened he had on his best suit of clothes when he went into the lake. Immediately after carrying the half-drowned girl to the doctor's, he started for his own home, and as he did so and glanced down at his dripping clothes, he exclaimed:

"By Jiminy! won't the old man give me Jessie! But no," the boy added, after a moment, "he can not whale me for saving Jennie Snell's life."

Jennie Snell was a pretty girl of thirteen, the daughter of the richest man in the county—a money-lending skinflint, who held mortgages against twenty farms in the vicinity where he resided; and woe betide the owner who didn't come up punctually with the interest money. There was no mercy or pity in the heart of Jacob Snell.

Tom Cary was the step-son of a poor farmer, whose land was mortgaged to Jacob Snell, and James Riddle liked not the man who held the grip upon his farm. Besides, James Riddle was not a loving or a lovable man at best, and her neighbors had said when the Widow Cary married him that she would rue the day. If accounts were true, the prophecy had been fulfilled.

James Riddle had no children of his own, and he made up for the loss by treating his wife's son in the most brutal manner when opportunity offered. OIT

The farm had originally belonged to the widow, and she had been induced to deed it to her husband, and he mortgaged it to Jacob Snell, and turned out to be a cruel, hard-hearted, selfish man. The widow discovered her mistake; but, alas! it was too late to change her destiny, and she lived on, an unhappy woman, looking forward to the day when poor Tom would be old enough to look out for himself.

Thus matters stood when Tom wended his way homeward in his dripping clothes. The sun had traveled far westward and the air was becoming colder as the lad, whistling to keep up his courage, turned in at his step-father's gate.

James Riddle happened to be standing in the porch and saw the lad coming, and at a glance he saw that the boy had been in the

An oath fell from his lips. He stepped down from the porch and beckoned the lad to follow him toward the barn. Tom knew what the summons meant, and running forward, exclaimed:

"Hold on, father; listen to what I've got to say."

The man scowled, a second curse fell from his lips, and he said:

"Come along. I'll give you a chance to explain, you dog!"

Tom followed the enraged man. He was a sturdy lad of sixteen, strong as a young ox, and with a will like iron, and as he walked along he muttered:

"Hang it! shall I let him whale me?"

Tom had suffered severely at the hands of his step-father and his patience had become exhausted; had it not been for his mother he would have rebelled a long time before.

"I reckon I'll have to take it, for mother's sake," he muttered; and immediately added, "I will not stand it much longer, though; it's getting monotonous."

James Riddle was a large, raw boned, powerful man, and possessed a cruel and evil disposition.

Tom had stopped a moment; but his father called:

"Come along, you rascal!"

"Father," said Tom, "what have I done to offend you?"

"I sent you to town in your best clothes, and, instead of going and coming, you have been playing upon the ice.'

"Father, let me explain just this once."

"No, you scoundrel; I will not listen to one word. I'll teach you to talk back to me!"

Father and son had reached the barn, and the former had possessed himself of an immense ox-whip.

"Just once, father, listen to me."

"I will not hear a word. You shall not put me off with one of your lies. You broke in the ice. I see it all.'

"I was coming home, when Jennie-

"Hush! Don't say another word!" and as the father spoke the lash cut the air and came down upon Tom's shoulders.

The lad did not move nor flinch, although the blow cut clear through his clothes, and stung as though dealt upon the naked

The second blow fell, and at that moment a cry of anguish was heard, and a white-faced woman came rushing from the house.

"James! James!" she called, "what are you doing?"

"Teaching this rascal to obey me."

"What has he done? I know Tom would not willfully disobey

"You go into the house."

"No, no; tell me, what has he done?"

"I sent him to town, and told him to go and come without loitering a moment by the way. I know he was gone a long time. I was waiting for him, and here he has come home dripping wet. His tell-tale clothes prove to me that he has been playing at the lake instead of obeying me. He broke through the ice, and this time he can not put me off with his lies."

"Oh, Tom!" cried the mother, as she glanced at the lad's drip-

ping clothes.

"I'll tell you, mother, how it all occurred."

"Tell your father."

"I tried to tell him, but he would not listen."

"Tell him now."

"No. He struck me. I'll never offer another explanation to him as long as I live."

Yes, yes, Tom; your father does not understand. He will listen to you.'

"Not me, mother," came the answer, in resolute tones.

"There! do you listen to his insolence, madame?"

The father raised the whip once more. The mother threw up her arms, and called

Hold! Hold! Let the boy explain."

"Stand aside, or I'll give it to you too."

The man was beside himself with rage and evil temper.

"You would not strike me, James?"

"Then stand aside."

A black look settled upon Tom's face, and he said:

"Father, don't you dare to strike mother!"

As the lad spoke his eyes wandered to a bale-stick, and it was evident that he had resolved to resent a blow dealt to his mother.

"Mary, will you stand aside?" cried the violent man.

"Yes; but, oh, James, let the boy speak!"

"He has spoken."

The mother did not step aside, and Tom, evidently fearing the man would strike his mother, changed his own position so as to give the man a chance, and, as he did so, down came the whip. It sounded fearfully in the ears of the mother.

She ran forward, again the whip descended, and the second blow

fell upon the shoulders of the wife and mother.

Tom could stand no more.

He grabbed a bale-stick, and as the father raised his whip to strike the mother a second blow-a blow calmly and deliberately aimed-Tom leaped forward and dealt his step-father a blow with the stick, and down the powerful man fell.

The blow only stunned him for a moment, and he was upon his feet, and terrible were the oaths that fell from his foam-flecked

He looked round, but Tom had gone; the crisis had come; Tom could stand no more.

"Where is he?" demanded the father.

"I do not know. He ran across the fields. Oh, James! James! that it should ever come to this!"

"I'll show you what it will come to if I ever set hands on that villain again."

"James, you should have listened to his story. I know what he had to tell you. To think that the boy should have been thrashed for a noble act of bravery!'

"Yes, it's a brave act in your eyes for him to disobey his father and then knock him down with a bale-stick.'

"James, the boy was beside himself. He thought you struck me purposely.'

"And so I did, and I will again."

"No, James, you will never strike me again; mark my words. I have been an obedient and faithful wife to you, and you have illused me; but this is the first time you ever struck me. You will never do it again. Now let me tell you why Tom was late."

"I do not wish to hear."

"But you must hear! you shall hear! We may never see that boy again. You have driven him from home, and I do not blame him for going.'

"Bah! the shiftless lubber will be stealing home and begging my pardon before morning."

"You do not know the boy, James; he never will ask your pardon, he will never return home again, and I could not ask him to

"What! did you advise him to run away from home?"

"No, I did not; but I often wished that he would; but I would never have advised it; but I am glad he has at last escaped your tyranny."

"So you put him up to running away?"

"I did not; but I am glad he has gone."
"Oh, he'll come back."

"If he does, he's no son of his father, and I shall advise him not to come back."

James Riddle began to feel very uncomfortable Tom Cary, although but sixteen, was the best farm-hand in the whole county. He could do more work than any two ordinary farm-hands in the land, and the man Riddle had the lad's services for his bare board.

He could not afford to lose him, and he had never considered the contingency of the lad's running away. Such violent men never do see things until it is too late to mend them.

"Here, Mary, none of this nonsense."

"What nonsense, James?"

"Your telling me you will advise that scapegrace to skip away."

"I certainly shall."

"Then listen to me. I'll bring him back and put him in jail."

"How can you put him in jail?"

"On a charge of attempted murder." "James Riddle, what do you mean?"

"Just what I say; and you will give the testimony that will send him to jail, or swear to the falsehood that will send your own soul to perdition."

"Devil! you do not mean what you say."

"Yes, I do mean what I say. That villain tried to kill me. He knocked me down with a bale-stick. He meant to kill me."

A terrible silence followed the last declaration.

The mother at length broke the silence. She said:

"James, will you promise to treat him better if he comes back?"

"I'll make no promises. I tell you, I'd be afraid to live with him-afraid of my life."

"But you were wrong to-night. You whaled him for what the whole village will applaud him for doing."

"What did he do?"

" He saved the life of Jacob Snell's daughter."

"If I'd known that I'd have lathered him worse!" came the brutal answer.

James Riddle hated Jacob Snell.

"Tom was on his way home, obeying you to the letter, when Jennie Snell broke through the ice, and she would have been drowned, it Tom had not rescued her, and that is how he got his clothes wet."

#### CHAPTER ...

Tom did not return that night, and the following morning James Riddle was compelled to rise and perform the labors usually performed by his step-son.

James Riddle was not a man who loved work, and he was very wroth at Tom's absence. He still indulged the hope that Tom would return and sue for pardon, and he was resolved to make the youth suffer all the more in the end.

The day wore on, and James Riddle went to different points in the village and inquired for Tom; but no one had seen the lad, while on every hand he heard praises of the boy's bravery and gallantry.

Tom Cary was a great favorite. His father had been a soldier in the war, and eventually died of a wound he received while in the service.

Toward evening Mrs. Riddle was sitting on the porch indulging sad and gloomy thoughts, when she observed a ragged-looking tramp, with a complexion almost as black as a negro's, walking up the path toward her.

She was afraid of tramps, and, as her husband was absent, she was glad when she saw an immense dog, belonging to the place, spring at the intruder in a savage manner; but she was surprised when she saw the dog show signs of gladness and recognition.

The tramp gave the animal a kick and sent him howling away, and the woman's surprise became absolute amazement.

As the dog sprung away, the tramp advanced rapidly toward the porch, and in a low tone said:

" Mother!"

Quickly the answer came:

" Tom!"

"Yes, mother; I have come to bid you good-by."

"Where are you going, Tom?"

"If I can get your consent and blessing, mother, I shall go to New York."

"How will you get to New York, Tom?"

"I have a little money, mother; but I shall walk there."

"What will you do when you get to New York?"

"Get work. I am strong and healthy, and I have a fair common-school education. I will have no trouble. I was talking to Mr. Gay, and he says a boy like me would get along well in New York"

"I am sorry to have you go away from me, Tom, and under other circumstances I would not consent; but as it is, I think it's for the best."

"And you give your consent, mother?"

"Yes, my boy."

"Oh, mother, you will never regret it."

" But, Tom-"

At that moment a voice was heard, and both knew that James Riddle was returning.

"Tom," said the mother, "I must see you again before you go."

"I start to-night, mother."

"Listen, Tom; meet me to night at the spring in the woods. I must see you, and have a long talk with you before you go. Be at the spring after the moon is up, and wait till I come."

" Mother, I will be there."

"Tom, your father must not recognize you, or he will do you

Tom was a quick-witted fellow, and he possessed many accom-

plishments; among others a great power of imitation and mimiery, and he gave his mother the cue by saying in broken Italian

"You're a mean-a woman! You no giv-a me money"

"I've offered you something to eat, and if you will not take that, you shall have nothing."

James Riddle overheard the dialogue, and in his usual harsh voice exclaimed, as he made a rush at the supposed tramp:

"I'll give you money, you scoundrel!"

The tramp sprung nimbly away, and the farmer pursued him; but the supposed beggar was too quick, and leaping the fence to the road, ran away.

"I am glad he has gone," said the woman; and indeed she was glad, and glad also that the cunning lad had escaped recognition.

"Madame, I can not hear anything of that boy."

The mother made no reply.

"And now there's one thing I want to tell you, Mary; you must find him, or I'll get a warrant out for him and set the constable to look him up, and I'll bring him back if it costs me a hundred dollars."

The woman made no answer, and the farmer went into the house to eat his supper,

Meantime, Tom skipped across the fields and approached the house of Jacob Snell, and in a little grove he espied a spirit-like object in a white dress.

"I was afraid you would not come, Tom."

"Yes, Jennie, I was sure to come after the message 1 sent you."
We will here reveal a secret. Although Tom was but sixteen and Jennie Snell but thirteen, there had been a courtship going on

between them for a number of months.

Tom was a bright-faced, handsome lad, and at school had always been foremost in study as well as in all athletic games.

He was, indeed, the hero of the school and of the village as well, and although Jennie's father was rich and Tom a poor boy, the girl's imagination had been dazzled by his heroism, and she thought she loved him.

We will not repeat all that passed between them, but pass over to the point where Tom, after having related his ill-treatment at his step-father's hands, said:

"And I'm going to run away, Jennie."

" Where are you going?"

"I'm going to New York to earn a fortune, and when I am rich I will come back and you shall be my wife."

"Oh, you must not go, Tom; I can not let you go."

"Yes, I must go, Jennie; but you will see me again, and wher am rich and great you will be proud."

The girl was finally persuaded to take Tom's view of it, and the two, in true lover-like style, exchanged the parts of a broken ring as a pledge of fidelity, exchanged the most binding of vows, kissed, and separated to meet under startling circumstances later on.

After parting from Jennie, Tom went to the spring in the woods, to await the coming of his mother.

The moon was well up, and Tom Cary had been at the spring in the woods over an hour, but his mother came not; another hour passed and the village clock struck the midnight hour, and still the mother came not.

He had concluded to cross toward his mother's home, and had proceeded but a short distance when he espied the outlines of a female form crossing toward the spring.

A moment later and mother and son stood face to face under the moonlight and beside the spring.

"You have been kept waiting, my son?"

"Yes, mother, but it does not matter; I could wait until the crack of doom for you."

"Your father did not get to sleep as early as usual to-night, and it was a long time before I could steal away."

"It is a hard thing when a mother is compelled to steal away to see her son!" said Tom, in a bitter tone.

"Tom, do you know I once lived in New York?"

"I did not know it, mother."

"Yes, Tom, I was born in New York City, and spent all my early years there. I have some relatives in New York, but I have not heard from them in many years. I do not know whether they are living or not; but I have prepared a list of the names of a few of them, and I have also given you our pedigree on my side of the house, so that, should you ever meet any of my relatives, they will know that you are my son."

"You are very kind and thoughtful, mother."

"I do not know as it will amount to anything, Tom; but we can not tell about those things, and it is of matters of greater importance that I came here at this late hour to talk with you about. Tom, my dear boy, you have never been in a great city. You have no

idea of the temptations that will meet you on every hand. It is a terrible ordeal for a young man, and nothing can save you unless you go there with good principles deeply rooted in your soul, and even then there is peril. Tom, I have sought to teach you what is right. I have sought to instill in your mind righteous principles, and I trust I have succeeded. I have never forgotten you in my prayers since the first moment you opened your eyes in life, and I shall not cease to pray for you as long as the power of prayer remains to me."

"Mother, you need have no fear," said Tom in an assured tone.

"My dear boy, I do have fear, and so must you have fear, and this constant fear that you will fall into temptation may be the beacon-light to guide your steps safely through all temptations."

"Mother, when tempted, I will think of you. I shall always have your image before me. I love you as dearly as a son ever

loved his mother."

"That is all right, Tom. A son's love for his mother has proved a wonderful armor of safety always, and when you think of me, remember that I shall be ceaselessly praying, 'Guard my darling boy against all temptations!' Remember this, Tom, and when any particular temptation assails you, stop and think that even at the very moment that prayer may be going up for your safety and preservation."

"Mother, I will always remember all you say."

When her counsels were complete, she caused him to kneel with her beside the spring, and in a low, distinct voice she sent upward a prayer, every word of which was burned, as it were, into his brain -became seared in his memory. And we will here anticipate by saying that the remembrance of that mother's prayer influenced the life of that boy throughout his whole career, and will probably go with him to the last hour of mortal existence.

When mother and son rose from their knees, a moment's silence followed; indeed, it was a solemn scene; the clear, star-studded sky above, the glorious moon plowing its way through the heavens, the dark trees waving in the night breeze, and the pale face of the mother illuminated with holy confidence and trust in Him who had made the stars, the moon, and the earth, and made possible all the loveliness of the surroundings.

"Tom," she said, after a moment, "I have a surprise for you. I have been anticipating that the day would come when you would go out into the world to make your own way, and through many years, a penny at a time, I have laid by a sum for you, and here 1t is "

The mother handed to the lad an old-fashioned, steel bead purse.

"I can not take this money, mother; you will need it possibly

"No, my son, you must not go to New York empty-handed. It will be some time before you get to work, and you must have something to sustain you until you do."

"Mother, I have a proposition to make. Give this money to father. He is in financial trouble, and it will help him. I am sorry I struck him with the bale-stick, and this money will be some little atonement, and it may make him kinder to you."

"My son, I am glad you express those sentiments, but I can not, under all the circumstances, hold you to blame for the blow you dealt James Riddle; but you must take this money. give it to him."

"Listen, mother. He is in trouble. He owes Jacob Snell back interest, and he may become less harsh if he has the money to

pay it."
"My boy, I will not do it. I have wronged you enough. It is James Riddle's own fault that he has a mortgage on his farm. When he married me that farm was clear. I deeded it to him in trust, as I believed, for you; it should have been your farm, but that man deceived me, and the conveyance was absolute and without restriction; then he procured a mortgage. He wasted his time, or the mortgage would never have been on the place. Six years ago a relative made me a present of one thousand dollars, and in one of James Riddle's kinder moments I told him of the money, and he beguiled me to loan it to him to pay off a portion of the mortgage on the farm, and he promised to reconvey it to me. I let him have the money, and within three months he had squandered every penny. He attended horse-races and bet the money away, and never thanked me, but abused me more cruelly. No, no! my boy, he shall never receive another penny from me."

Mother, keep the money for yourself."

"Tom, you take it, and it may aid you to make a home to which you can take me some day.

" Mother, I will take it.

It was half an hour later when mother and son parted, and Tom started to walk to the railroad town, to take the train for New York.

### CHAPTER III.

MRS. RIDDLE had stolen out after her husband had gone to sleen. The man was a heavy sleeper as a rule, and seldom awoke until ft was getting-up time; but, as it happened, upon the night of which we write, he had a bad dream, and awoke with a yell.

Being terror-stricken, he looked for his wife to arouse her for a moment until he had recovered his nerve.

He could not feel her in her accustomed place, and he rose from his bed and lighted a candle. His wife was gone, and a curse fell from his lips.

"Aha! I see!" he muttered. "She has stolen away to meet that scamp Tom. Well, well! I'll catch 'em both, and woe betide 'em when I do!"

The man put on his clothes and secured his gun. He was at heart a big coward. He descended to the kitchen, opened the door, and was going forth when at the very threshold he met his wife.

"Aha!" he ejaculated, "what does this mean?"

"I thought you were sleeping, James."

"Yes, I know you did; and you've been out and held a talk with that rebel Tom Cary, and you've been aiding and abetting him ia his rebellion against me."

"I have seen Tom."

- "Oh, I know you have seen him. Where is the scamp? Why don't he come home like a man?"
- "Tom will never come home again, James, to abide. He goes out into the world to make his own living.'

'He does, eh? Well, this is the gratitude he shows me for supporting him all these past years."

"Hold, James Riddle! Do not say you have supported him these past years, or you will force me to mention unpleasant truths, while I would prefer to remain silent. According to your own words, oft repeated, you should be glad that he is gone. You always said he was a burden, of no use to you on the farm, and that if it were not for me, you would turn him adrift. He has gone adrift, and gone with my consent."

"Gone with your consent?"

- "Yes, with my consent and blessing. I could not stand it any longer. To think that the boy should have been beaten for saving the life of a fellow-creature!"
- "Why didn't he tell me so, the stubborn lout, and save all the
- "He tried to tell you, but you would not listen to him."

"It is false!"

- "Never mind, we will not argue the question. The boy has gone, and he will not come back.
- "Well, I'll see whether he will come back or not. I'll bring him
- "James, you compel me to say that you are not the boy's father. You have no control over him. You can not compel him to come

"We will see, madame."

- "He has my consent to go. I am his natural and legal guard-You can not bring him back."
- "He will come back to the farm or come back and go to jail."

"Come back and go to jail?"

"Yes; he made a murderous attack upon me. I have consulted with Lawyer Byrne, and he says I can send him up for five or seven years."

"It's false!"

"You will find out whether it is false or not."

A moment the woman was silent. Her face became set and her eyes gleamed with an unusual light.

She advanced toward her husband with upraised hand, and pointed at him a warning finger, as in solemn tones she said:

"James Riddle, you make a charge against my son if you dare!" and without another word she strode past her husband and entered the house.

The man followed her, and demanded:

" What do you mean?"

"You understand what I mean! You make a charge against my son and I will make a charge against you! Yes, you send him to jail for one year, and I will send you there for ten!"
"We shall see!" exclaimed the man, and a volley of oaths es-

The man was not really scared by the woman's threats, as he had no notion that he could send Tom to jail longer than for a few days for a simple assault. All he wanted was to scare the lad into a return to work on the farm.

The two days the lad had been away opened the man's eyes to his step-son's real value as an assistant; indeed, without Tom it meant possible bankruptcy, and a surrender of the farm.

Meantime, Tom trudged along to the town, twenty miles distant from the spot where he had parted from his mother.

He had purchased his ticket and was waiting for the train, when to he saw his step-father and the village constable drive up to the station.

The lad stole away, and went to a station two miles above, where he boarded the train and stowed himself away in the baggage-car.

The train reached the station where the lad originally intended to board it, and Tom lay low, and a few moments later the cars started.

Tom thought he was all right, and crawled out of his hidingplace, and at the same moment his step-father, accompanied by the constable, entered the car.

"Aha, you rascal! So I've caught you at last, eh?"

"Not yet!" cried Tom; and a startling incident followed.

The train was crossing a trestle-bridge, and on each side were the waters of the Hudson, and as Tom spoke he sprung to the open door of the baggage-car, and without another word made a spring head first. He struck the water, went under like a duck, and glided again to the surface, and when he did so he saw the tail-end of the car passing through a distant cut.

It took the lad but a moment to gain the bridge, and he ran along the trestle-work until he teached the solid ground, when he darted off in a lateral direction and made for the hills.

At the moment he sprung from the car he carried his stick, also his little bundle, with him, and the latter he had recovered.

Tom lay low until night, and then started to travel to New York afoot. He was a strong, plucky boy, and traveled by night and hid in the woods by day, and on the third night he entered the great city of New York.

He was proceeding along down one of the great avenues, travelstained and dirty, when a bird of prey let his evil eye fall on the lad, and he went for him, and within an hour after his arrival in the city the farm-lad was brought face to face with his first temptation and peril.

Tom was walking along looking in the store windows, a look of wonder upon his face, when a well-dressed young man stepped up beside him, and in a casual way remarked:

"That is a handsome display."

"Beautiful," answered Tom.

"Just arrived in the city?" said the stranger.

" Yes."

Tom looked the stranger over, and was pleased with his appearance.

He wondered that such a nice-looking young gentleman would speak to such a home-spun countryman.

"You have no friends in the city, eh?"

" No."

"What brought you here?"

"I've come to look for work. I want to settle in the city."

" You look as though you had walked in."

"Yes, I did."

"Dear me! it's tough to be so poor as to be compelled to walk, when it's so handy to come by train."

Tom's pride was aroused, and he said:

"I didn't walk in because I was too poor to buy a ticket."

"Oh, you wanted to see the country?"

"I had reasons for desiring to walk to the city."

"You will want a little money, young fellow, in New York, as you can't pick up a job in a day or a week."

"I don't expect to."

- "And have you money enough to take care of yourself for a month or so?"
  - "Yes, I have."
  - "Where are you going to board?"

"I don't know yet."

"I kinder like you, young fellow. Let me tell you: I was a country boy. I came to New York. I walked into the city—walked from away out West. I had a hard time of it. I was poor. I hadn't a dollar when I arrived in New York, but I had pluck and energy, and I've got plenty of money now. I tell you a fellow can get along here when he once gets a start."

Tom's heart warmed toward the stranger.

- "I was just going to get something to eat, and as I was a poor lad like you once, I'm going to ask you to come along with me."
- "I'm much obliged," said Tom, "but I won't accept your in-
  - "What's your name?"
  - " Tom Cary."

- "And where are you from?"
- "Katonia."
- "I don't know where Katonia is; but see here, I'd like to help you, Tom, if I can."

"Thank you."

- "Just come along with me and have a good, square meal. You won't be sorry."
- "I don't want to accept favors. I've money enough to pay for all I get, and if you will let me pay for my own meal, I'll go with you."
- "That's all right, Tom; have it your own way. Come along."

It was early in the evening, and the young man led Tom to a cozy restaurant where they had a good meal, and when they got through the stranger insisted upon paying the full bill, and Tom reluctantly consented.

"Let me see, Tom; you haven't got a boarding-place?"

" No."

"I know of a nice place."

"I must hunt up a cheap place," said Tom. "I do not know how long I may be compelled to board,"

"You must go to a respectable place, Tom, if you expect to get a situation, and I can take you to a nice place where it is cheap, and where you will be treated like one of the family; and, besides, the lady who keeps the bouse may help you to get a position."

"I might go and look at the place," said Tom.

"All right; I will take you there."

The two proceeded along and were passing a theater.

"Have you ever been to the theater, Tom?"

" Never."

"Well, that's so; you never were in the city. I forgot. Well, come, let's take a peep. We can go to the boarding-house later on, and if you do not come to terms, hang it! you can room with me for one night."

Tom was just fascinated with his new-found friend, and as he had never had any experience, not a suspicion crossed his mind.

"I don't think I want to spend any money to go into a theater," said Tom.

"Oh, it won't cost us anything. I'm acquainted with the proprietor, and he passes myself and friends free."

Tom permitted himself to be led in the theater, which was a low variety show; but as our young hero had never seen a theater, to him it was magnificent. Indeed, the scene was dazzling, and he was completely bewildered.

He was young, buoyant, human, and inexperienced, and the scene intoxicated him. He laughed until he thought he should fall to the floor from sheer exhaustion.

After the conclusion of the first act, Tom's friend led him to the barroom and asked him to have a drink.

"I don't drink," said Tom.

"Well, I don't drink much myself; it's a bad habit; but I'm awful dry. We can have a lemonade with a stick in it."

Tom did not know what a stick in a lemonade meant, but he knew a lemonade was harmless enough, and he nodded assent.

The lemonade with the stick in it was made, and Tom liked the taste. The insidious liquor was concealed under the other ingredients.

"What is a stick in a lemonade?" asked Tom.

"Oh, it's lemonade with syrup in it."

"It's good," said Tom, as he drank off the really pleasant beverage.

The two went in and saw a second act, and Tom was thoroughly charmed. It was the most amusing hour he had ever passed in all his life.

Again they adjourned to the bar, and the bird of prey said:

"I'm going to have a country drink this time."

"A country drink? What's that?" asked Tom, innocently.

"Some thrashed milk."

"I never heard of it in the country," said Tom; "but I like milk in any shape."

The young man took an opportunity to order a milk-punch, and he told the bar-tender to make one of them very strong.

The drinks were made, and Tom drank it off, and as the liquor was smothered under the milk and sugar, and as Tom really could not identify the taste of liquor, he did not detect the fraud, and he said he liked thrashed milk.

They returned to see another act, and Tom began to experience the exhilaration following the thrashed milk.

He felt just splendid, and thought the city an elysium of delight.

Alas! he had started in badly; he was starting out at the very threshold of the devil's lane.

Again they went to the bar-room and drank some thrashed eggs,

DARING TOM CARY.

better known as eggnog, and when the theater closed Tom had no idea of time or place.

Alas! had a mother's influence faded away so soon?

#### CHAPTER IV.

Tom Carr was naturally a jolly fellow. He enjoyed fun and jollity; the love of merriment was born in him, and he had been kept down so long he broke loose.

He was not a malicious boy; he had good principles, but at times he was what is called "up to the devil," and frequently in his native village had been engaged in some wild freaks.

When the theater closed, Tom was dead in love with his new friend, and as they came to a halt under a gas-light, the bird of prey said:

"Let me see, Tom, we must make a calculation and see how you can stand a pull."

"What do you mean?"

"Well, it may be some time before you get a job, and we must calculate how your money is going to hold out. I've taken a real liking to you, and I'm going to help you."

"And I've taken a real liking to you," said Tom. "What's

your name?"

"Fred."

"Fred, I like you."

"Thank you, Tom, and I'm going to see you through; you're a good fellow; how much money have you got? We must make a calculation"

"I've got five dollars," said Tom.

"Is that all?" and the face of the bird of prey became shadowed. Tom laughed slyly, and answered:

"In a purse I've got over a hundred dollars, but that sum is sacred; I don't break into it until I'm gone, most starved!"

The shadow vanished from the face of the bird of prey; a gleam shone in his vulturous eyes.

"It's lucky you met me, Tom."

"I'm glad I met you," answered the farm-lad.

The two proceeded a few blocks, and Tom began to realize that something was the matter with him. His eye-sight was uncertain, he reeled a little as he walked along, and occasionally he ran up against some object.

"I wonder what's the matter with me? I feel so strange; kinder dizzy," he said in an innocent tone.

"You're tired; and the excitement of the show has set your head to swimming," came the answer; and a cold-blooded smile played over the features of the bird of prey.

"I guess that's it," said Tom; "but I tell you I feel awful queer."

"Oh, you'll get over it, and get used to it in time; but here we are."

The two had stopped in front of quite an imposing-looking house. Tom looked up, and a large building reeled before his eyes.

"What place is this?" he asked.

"The boarding-house."

"Too stylish a place for me."

"Oh, no; you'll be all right there. You won't pay any more than you would in a cheap house. Anyhow, we shall go in and see."

The door was opened, and a stream of light flashed out, and the sound of music was wafted to the bewildered ears of the young farm-lad.

Tom hesitated and drew back, when his friend said:

"Come along. I reckon they've got a party here to-night; but it's all right."

Tom suffered himself to be led forward, and a moment later he was in an elegantly furnished parlor, where elegantly dressed women were dancing with men of all kinds.

Tom stood and gazed around the room in a bewildered manner, then a cold chill passed over his frame.

He fell to trembling, and his nervous system received a terrible shock.

He had left his stick and bag of clothes at a restaurant, to be called for, at the suggestion of his friend.

The young countryman stood a moment gazing around, and strange and varying sensations passed over his frame. He had been left alone—his friend had gone to speak to the boarding-lady, he said.

The dizziness left Tom's head, his glance came back clear and firm. He had not drank much liquor in the thrashed eggs and malk, but a very little would produce the effect upon one unused

to drinking, and a sudden shock would as readily annihilate the treacherous influence.

Tom suddenly became himself. He was not a natural born fool. He did not need experience to know that he was in the den of a sorceress, and with the first suspicion came a retrospective glance of the events of the night, and also a remembrance of all he had read at different times of life in New York.

All these thoughts passed through his mind in a few minutes; indeed, we might say seconds; his sudden affection for his new-found friend vanished. He remembered that he had innocently told Fred all a rogue would care to know.

Tom made a move toward the door and reached the hall, when his friend joined him, accompanied by an elegantly dressed and beautiful woman.

"Where are you going, Tom?"

"I'm going to get out of here."

"But hold on; here is the lady; she will talk to you about board."

"No; this is too stylish a place for me."

"But wait a moment; listen to what the lady has to say."

At that moment a lovely, innocent-faced girl came to the trio-She fixed a bewitching glance upon Tom, and said, archly:

"Is this handsome young man going to board here? Ah, won't that be lovely!"

She clapped her hands in childish glee; she was indeed a bewitching creature to gaze upon.

Tom said nothing, but moved toward the door. Once aroused, he was keen as they make 'em.

Tom had reached the door, and Fred laid his hand on his arm.

"Hold on," said Tom, in a low tone; "let's go outside and talk." The elegantly dressed lady whispered in Fred's ear:

"Go outside with him. Don't make a row here to-night."

The two went outside, and Tom walked hurriedly along to the corner of the street.

"Now, Tom," said Fred, "tell me what is the matter with you?"

"Fred, that place won't suit me."

"Why not?"

I want a place where they take permanent boarders; only transient boarders stop there."

The bird of prey perceived that Tom had tumbled.

"Come along and have some sport, Tom; don't make a fool of yourself."

"It's my idea that you're a thief, and it's time for you to move."

The bird of prey assumed a threatening look, and exclaimed:

"What do you mean?"

"That's what I mean!" said Tom.

Tom was thoroughly exasperated. The whole truth had dawned upon him. He realized that he had fallen, at the very first moment of his arrival in New York, into the hands of a rogue, a regular confidence man and sneak swindler, and he understood at last the dizziness he had momentarily felt.

He understood what a lemonade with a stick in it, and thrashed eggs and milk meant. He had never tasted liquor before, but he had seen men under the influence of liquor, and the whole truth dawned upon him. And when he had said to his new-found acquaintance, "That's what I mean!" he dealt the bird of prey a powerful blow that sent him reeling into the street.

The bird of prey was a man, and Tom was but a lad, but he was a man in muscle and agility. Indeed, he was a natural athlete, and the best boxer and wrestler in the county where he had resided.

Fred gathered himself up—he had been taken unawares—and he made a rush at Tom, and the two clinched, and in a moment, after a short struggle, Tom threw the thief on his back and rolled on top of him.

At the same instant two policeman appeared, and as the young men rolled and struggled they were seized, separated, and lifted to their feet.

One cop held Tom by the collar, and the other held Fred.

"Well, what does this mean?" and one of the policemen flashed a glance in Fred's face, and at once remarked:

"Aha, Johnny, I think I know you, and I'm happy to take you in!"

"And I know this chap," said the other cop, as he peered in Tom's face. "He's got up good; but I know him all the same. The scoundrels! I reckon they're fighting over a divvy."

If the real thief had been a regular he would have had at least manhood enough to have declared Tom's innocence; but he was a sneak-thief, a mean, low-spirited confidence operator, and he kep his mouth shut.

Tom was amazed when the police-officer declared a recognition, and did not understand the term "He's got up well," and he said, innocently:

"You never saw me before, officer. I just arrived in York tonight."

Oh, yes, I understand, you fellows are always just arriving to York; but come along-in you go. We can send you up for a few

days, anyhow, on the charge of fighting in the street."
"Fred," appealed Tom, "have you nothing to say."
The familiar address of "Fred" went against Tom. The officers took it for a slip of the tongue, and did not understand that it was spoken in simple innocence,

The thief remained silent.

"That fellow can tell you I'm all right and a stranger in the city," said Tom.

"Oh, that be hanged! Don't give us any of your guff. Come along!'

Tom was mad, and at the same time outraged. His introduction into New York was rough; the idea of spending his first night in a station-house was tough indeed.

The youth for a moment considered the chance of making an escape. He felt assured he could give the officer a trip and get away; but the question arose, where should he go after he was free?

The officers were leading their prisoners along, while our hero revolved matters in his mind, and at length he determined to make an effort to get away. He watched his chance; the policeman was not looking for a trick, and only realized its possibility when he found himself reeling head-foremost to the street pavement. As he fell he uttered a yell, and the officer in front, who was leading Fred, made a dash to save his comrade from falling. As he did so he lost his own balance and momentarily let go of his prisoner, when the latter glided away as silently and swiftly as an Arab. Tom also had started on a run, but both officers were at his heels.

Tom was a good runner, and if he had been better acquainted with the city he might have escaped; but, as it was, he had not run far before he ran straight into the arms of another policeman. He attempted to trip the officer into whose hand he had run, when suddenly he received a blow on the back of the head which sent him flat to the pavement.

The unfortunate youth had run right into a nest of officers, and one of them had been laying low behind a tree, and leaped out and dealt the youth a blow with his club just as Tom leaped over the prostrate figure of the man he had downed.

"Well, Mister Man, you thought you'd get away, eh?" exclaimed the officer whom our hero had just tripped up.

"I had a right to get away," said Tom. "You have arrested an innocent fellow."

"And you were in innocent company."

"That man tried to rob me, and I only served him out as he deserved."

"Oh, yes, it's very nice to say so now, since he has run away; but you come along."

'This is an outrage," said Tom.

"Oh, yes, a dreadful outrage; and it will be more outrageous, my dandy, when you are sent up the river for a year or two.

"Do they punish innocent men in New York?"

"Oh, yes, innocent chaps like you are punished when they're caught, you bet,"

The youth was led to the station-house, and the usual questions

Shame led Tom to give a false name, and he was searched. Fortunately, his mother's money was not found, as he had it sewed in a pocket in the inside of his waistcoat, and the examination was very superficial at best.

The youth was led down-stairs and placed in a cell, and left to his meditations, and the young man's thoughts were anything but

He had been about an hour in his cell when the doorman came and looked in on him, and said:

"You're rather young to be in such a place, my lad."

"I've committed no crime," said Tom.

"Then why are you here?"

Tom told his story in a plain, straightforward manner, and when he had concluded, the turnkey said:

'If you are telling me the truth, my lad, I'm sorry for you; for, indeed, you are in a bad scrape.'

"How can I be in a bad scrape? I have done no wrong."

"I'll tell you. When you were first arrested, if you had come right along with the officer, you would have been all right; but, you see, you have committed an assault on two policemen, and that will go against you. The chances are you will get two or three months in jail anyhow."

"I am innocent, sir."

"But you assaulted the officers."

"Didn't I have a right to escape when I am innocent?"

" No."

A sudden idea entered Tom's head.

He made up his mind to make a second effort to escape.

#### CHAPTER V.

THE young farm-lad began to realize that he was in a pretty serious scrape.

It was three o'clock in the morning, and all around was still. Tom had studied his surroundings when led down into the cell, and he was a rapid thinker, and resolved upon a plan. Once having formed his plan, he decided to put it in immediate execution.

'I will be taken before a judge to-morrow?"

" Yes."

"And I will be searched?"

"Sure."

Tom appeared to be thoughtful a moment, and then said:

"Whatever I've got that's valuable about me will be taken

"Yes; but if it is honestly yours it will be returned again."

"Maybe they will say I did not come honestly by it?"

"Well, I can't say anything about that."

"See here; can I trust you?"

" Certainly."

"I was searched upstairs."

" Well?"

"They didn't find something."

"Find what?"

"Some money."

"Don't say anything about it."

"But suppose I'm sent to jail to-morrow?"

"That's so."

" My clothes will be searched?"

"Sure."

"And something will be found, and I will never see it again; they will say they never saw it."

The doorman was thoughtful a moment, but at length said:

"That's so, and you're pretty sharp for a green countryman, or you're a rogue."

"I want to leave my money in your charge, and when I get out of this scrape you can return it to me.'

"How much money have you?"

"Some hundreds of dollars."

"Aha!" sighed the doorman.

The official imagined he smelled a mouse, and he thought he saw a chance, through some charging contingencies, to turn an honest

" Have you a pair of scissors?" asked Tom.

"No. What do you want with a pair of scissors?" and as the doorman spoke a suspicion can through his mind. He mentally exclaimed, "The fellow means to cut his gizzard!"

"I want to get the money."

" Hand it to me."

"I can't. It's sewed in the lining of my vest."

"See here; I've got a knife."

"Let me have it."

"You can't come that on me, young fellow."

"Can't come what?"

"Oh, never mind. I won't let you have a knife."

There came a twinkle in Tom's eyes. He saw a better plan to get at his purpose.

"I don't mean to injure myself," he repeated.

"You can't have a knife."

"Then we can't get at the money."

"And you want me to take care of it for you?"

" Yes.

"If I take the money you must not let any one know it is in my nossession."

"Oh, I know enough for that. Give me a knife."

"I can come in there and cut the money out."

The doorman spoke in a low tone.

"That will do," said Tom.

"And you do want me to take care of it?"

"Why would I say so, if I didn't? I'm not fooling."

"Wait a moment. I will go and get a knife."

Tom chuckled inwardly. He felt that there was a remote chance

that he might cheat the judge and the jail after all. He was a cunning fellow and bold as a lion, and prepared to take any chances.

The doorman was gone a few moments and returned.

"Now, see here, young fellow, if you're fooling me it will go hard with you, that's all. I think you're tricky."

"All right, that settles it! I'll keep my money."

"I am willing to take care of your money for you, if you are honest and really want me to do so."

"If I didn't, I wouldn't have said anything about it."

"Where is the money?"

"Sewed in the back lining of my vest."

"Do you know how much there is there?"

"Two hundred."

"In bills?"

" Yes."

The doorman opened the door and stepped in the cell, and Tom turned his back and indicated where the money was concealed.

The doorman placed his hands on the youth's back to feel for the bills, when Tom suddenly turned, tripped the man up, and sent him with a thud, butting head-first against the wall in one corner of the cell.

The doorman was momentarily stunned, and the prisoner leaped from the cell, closed the iron door and turned the key, and the next instant sprung forward and turned off the flickering gas.

The doorman set up a yelling, as Tom calculated he would do, and the boy ran to the steps leading to the office and placed himself closely in one corner.

In a moment steps were heard descending the stairs; two men ran down—the sergeant and a roundsman who happened to be in the station at the time.

The latter event was just what the youth was waiting for, and after the two officers had passed him he glided up the steps, reached the office, ran across the latter, and leaped down the stoop to the sidewalk, and glided away like a deer.

He only ran a short distance when he came down to a walk, and continued on his way.

Some few squares off he saw an officer. He darted in an alleyway, and permitted the officer to pass, when he started on again a free lad, and well he deserved his freedom, for he had made a cunning and bold stroke for liberty.

Meantime there were lively incidents occurring at the stationhouse; the imprisoned doorman who had been so nicely tricked was yelling like a good fellow; the roundsman and sergeant reached the cell door, and demanded:

"What is the matter?"

"Light the gas, and let me out."

The gas was lighted and the door opened and the doorman came forth, raging like a lion.

"Where is he?" demanded the officer.

"Where is who?"

"The prisoner; the young devil who was in there?"

"That is for you to say," said the sergeant.

The doorman stood a moment aghast, and then ran up into the office.

The open door told the story. The young prisoner had made good his escape.

The sergeant followed to the office, and looking suspiciously at the doorman, said:

"Will you explain this, sir?"

An idea struck the doorman, and he said:

"I will, sir.

The doorman got out of his dilemma in a very ingenious manner.

He exhibited the knife, and said:

"That scoundrel played a cunning trick on me. He waited until I came around to take a look in his cell, when he made a movement as though he were going to cut his throat. I opened the door and ran in the cell to save him, when he dodged under me, ran out, locked me in, and extinguished the gas."

"How did you get that crack on the head?"

"As the fellow darted out, I started to follow him, slipped and fell, or he never would have got away from me."

The circumstances of the escape of the prisoner were entered in the blotter, and the discomfited doorman returned to duty, and when once alone, he muttered:

"Well, that was the cutest trick ever played on me in my life. The smartest trick I ever heard of, and as I am out of the scrape, I'm glad the lad got away. He deserves his freedom, innocent or guilty. Hang me! if I don't believe he is innocent!"

Meantime, Tom had made good his escape, and considered himself very lucky.

The real fact is, Tom Cary had been a reader of the boys' papers, those great educators of the youth of the country, and he had learned how to avoid many snares in a great city, as many other boys will learn the same thing from reading this story.

The next country lad who comes to New York, after having read Tom Cary's adventures, will know better than to make the acquaintance of any stranger, no matter how pleasing and plausible he may appear. And they will also know better than to take lemonade with a stick in it, or thrashed milk and eggs.

Tom got down in the vicinity of Washington Market just after daylight, and went in to eat his breakfast in one of the many regular restaurants in that vicinity, and a few moments after he had seated himself at a table, a bluff man in a market-blouse and aprontook a seat near him. The market-man glanced the lad over, and a suspicion flashed through his mind.

"Are you a country boy?" he asked.

Tom had got into one scrape through making acquaintances, and he made no answer.

The market-man tried several times to draw the boy into conversation, but failed; and when he had concluded his meal, he said:

"My lad, I do not know why you will not answer me; if you were well acquainted in New York you would know there is no harm in answering me; but I was a country boy myself once."

Tom blurted out:

"Yes, I met another fellow from the country last night."

The market-man laughed heartily, and said:

"Ah, I see, you've had your fingers burned already. Have you come to New York to stay?"

"Yes, I have."

"I'll give you a bit of advice, and you can take it or not, just as you please: go home again, and you'll be better off in every way twenty years from now."

Having delivered himself of his well-meaning advice, the marketman went about his business.

Tom finished his breakfast and started to go up the street, and had not gone very far when he was suddenly blinded by something that squashed in his face. He wiped off the remains of a juicy tomato, and looked around to see a number of rough-looking men laughing, and a burly-looking fellow stood in a cellar-way with another tomato in his hand, which, it appeared, he was about to throw

"That is the fellow who gave me the crack in the eye," muttered Tom, as he slowly walked back.

Tom Cary was a wonder in one respect. His strength was phenomenal, and he had enjoyed the advantage of a thorough training at the hands of a young gentleman who sometimes visited the village where he lived for a season's fishing.

"Did you throw that tomato at me?" demanded Tom.

The fellow who had thrown the tomato was a genuine Smart Alec. There are many of them to be found as one travels the world over. All hands around were watching him, and he enjoyed the opportunity to show himself off.

"Go on about your business!" he said, and he raised his arm in a threatening manner as though about to throw the second tomato, and at the same time he laughed and looked around for the approving smiles of the lookers-on.

"You won't throw any more tomatoes at me," said Tom; "and in my opinion you are a mean, sneaking loafer!"

"What?" exclaimed the fellow, and he advanced toward Tom as though to strike him, and again looked around for the approving smiles.

He had expected Tom to start away, when he would have sent the second tomato after the farm-lad. Indeed, the fellow was a mean bully.

"You git!" exclaimed the fellow, and his face assumed an injured look, as though he were the aggrieved party and not the aggressor.

" No, I won't git!"

The fellow made a slap at Tom, and the next instant he received a stinging blow that knocked him clean across the sidewalk. He reeled against a stack of tomato baskets, and man and baskets went rolling down the cellar in an incongruous heap.

The market-men roared with laughter, and Tom quietly meved away.

The fellow who had been knocked over, however, emerged from the cellar with a heavy stick and made a rush at the country boy; the latter avoided the blows aimed at him, and dealt the fellow a second blow that doubled him in a heap in the muddy street. He had been hit so hard he did not get up.

Tom walked away undisturbed, while the bully picked himself up and imped back to his cellar amid the jeers and laughter of his mates.

It is not often that a scene of the kind described ends as related. Generally the poor country boy gets badly used; but in one case the bully caught a Tartar, and the wrongs of a score of innocent rurals were avenged.

Tom kept on up the street and almost got in another row.

He discovered that he attracted a great deal of attention, and could not understand it until he chanced to pass place where a large mirror stood on the sidewalk for sale, where he caught a full view of himself.

"By ginger!" he exclaimed, "I see it all now! And may I be chased by a mad cow if I don't fix this thing!"

#### CHAPTER VI.

come was a quick-witted feliow, and a glance in the mirror revealed the fact to him that he looked like a countryman in contrast with the people whom he met along the street. He realized it was his rural style which caused him to attract so much attention, and he resolved to metamorphose himself at once.

The lad went into a barber's shop and had his long locks cut off, and soon after left with a regular city hair-cut and a clean shave, he already sported an embryo growth of mustache.

From the barber's he went to a large ready-made clothing establishment and bought a good suit of clothes. He argued he could make no better use of a portion of the money his good mother had given him.

Tom was a real good-looking fellow, and when he exchanged his country clod-hoppers for a nice-fitting pair of shoes, he looked as nobby and citified as could be; his natural good form and looks, of course, aided him in the transformation.

He strolled up the Bowery and saw many signs of rooms at a low rate by the day, week, or month, with or without meals. He entered one of these places and secured a room, and at last had a home

He was walking out after having secured his room, when he passed a sayings-bank, and a new idea crossed his mind.

"Hang it!" he said, "I might be robbed of my money. I'll showe it in the bank!"

He did so, and secured a bank-book, only keeping a few dollars about him for immediate expenses.

One fact worried our hero. He could not find the place where he had been induced by the man Fred to deposit his little self-made trunk. In the latter was the Bible his mother had given him, and several other little mementos of his home-life.

Tom was strolling along when suddenly he uttered a cry of gratification. He espied his whilom friend, Fred, the fellow who had sought to play him for a fool. The sneak thief entered a low resort, and Tom started to follow him in, but after a moment changed his mind.

"No, no," he muttered; "that fellow may have lots of friends in that place, and I may get into a scrape. I'll lay for him."

Tom hung around. Half an hour passed, when the fellow Fred came forth. He passed right by our metamorphosed farm-lad and did not recognize him.

"The scoundrel don't recognize me!" muttered Tom, as he moved on after the fellow, and, when in a side street, suddenly clapped his hand on the rascal's shoulder, and said:

"I want you!"

The thief started as if to make away. It was evident he thought a detective was after him; but when he saw it was only a well-dressed lad he exclaimed in an angry tone:

"Halloo! What are you about?"

The fellow evidently did not recognize the farm-boy whom he had set out to rob on the previous evening.

"You don't remember me?" said Tom.

"No; you've made mistake."

The thief evidently suspected Tom was some former victim.

"I haven't made a mistake," said Tom. "I know you-your name is Fred."

"No, my n ne is not Fred, and I never saw you before in all my life; and I don't want you to bother me!"

The fellow assumed a fierce tone.

"It ain't so long since you saw me. You ought to remember, as the police saved you from a good welting!"

The fellow glared at Tom, and suddenly exclaimed.

" y ain't-

"Yes, I am the countryman you set in to rob last night."

"Well, you have transformed. Hang it! were you working me all the time, when I thought I had a greenie?"

Tom saw that the fellow suspected what his words suggested, and he did not see fit to immediately dispel the illusion.

"You got away from the police?" said Tom.

"Yes; when you downed the cop who had you, I gave the other peeler a tumble, and made off. I see you got away."

"Yes, I got away in the end, but I was in the station-house."

"You were?"

"Yes; I got caught later on. I run into a nest of blue-coats, and was downed with a club, and they took me in."

" And the judge let you off, eh?"

- "Well, I didn't stay to consult the judge."
- "How did you get away? Did somebody bail you?"
- "Well, I waited awhile for you to come and bail me out." The thief laughed.

"I'd have come if I'd known you were there."

- "That's good; but you might have come and inquired."
- "And taken a stop-over ticket, eh?"

Tom laughed in his turn, and said:

- "See here, Fred, I'll forgive you on one condition."
- "That's cool and good! What have you to forgive?"
- "You got me into all that trouble last night."

"Can't see it, Tom."

- "See here; don't try to play me any more."
- "Play you? Well, that's good! It will take a smart man to play you, and I think you played me."

How so?"

"Well we won't discuss it. But see here, don't you want to join our gang?"

"What!" ejaculated Tom.

"We're making plenty of money. We've a regular organization. Come down to one of our meetings."

Tom gazed in wonderment. The fellow actually was inviting him to join a gang of thieves. The farm-lad was quick, however, and said:

"I'll think it over."

- "We've got some of the smartest brains in the city in our state."
  - "When do you meet?"

"To-night."

"Where?"

"Oh, that's telling. You'll have to meet me, and I'll take you there; but you will have to agree to go in under the rules."

"We'll talk it over, Fred."

"No chance unless you get in with us to-night; there's only one vacancy, and I'd like to have you as a pal for me; you're such a good hitter."

A strange scheme entered Tom's mind.

- "I may come down and take a look at you; but see here, I can't get my kit!" said Tom.
  - "Oh! you mean your guy pack?"

"Yes."

"Why not?"

"You placed it with that man. I don't believe he would give it to me."

"Well, come along. I'll get it for you."

The two started off together.

Tom realized it as a strange experience to be walking along the streets in a friendly and confidential manner with a professional thief, and he did not dream that in so doing he was becoming a marked man. All he really desired was to recover his guy pack, as Fred called it, and he was prepared to let his new acquaintance slide

The two reached the place, and Tom got his bundle, which he fixed in a paper and started out.

Fred attempted to go with him; but Tom said:

- "I'm going on a little private business, Fred."
- "Will you meet me to-night?"
- "Where shall I meet you?"
- "Nine o'clock, at the corner of Hester Street and the Bowery."
- "I reckon I'll come," said Tom.

The lad did mean to go, but he did not mean to meet Fred. He just intended to take a little observation for .easons of his own; but as the fates ordained, he changed his programme.

Fred walked close to Tom, and said:

"I'm letting you into a big thing; and if you don't meet mee you'll be the loser."

"I don't desire to lose anything," said Tom.

The farm-lad was not altogether satisfied as to what his whilem

The tarm-lad was not altogether satisfied as to what his willow triend was up to, and he was teeling his way.

The two youths a few minutes later separated, and we will here say that Fred, the thief, was really deceived. He was led to believe that Tom's genuine innocence was, after all, only fine acting, and as Tom was, as he well knew, a good hitter, he was anxious to

get him as a pal.

Tom parted from his friend, and walked a short distance, when he suddenly felt a tap on his shoulder, and turning around, he be-

held a sharp-taced man.

"I reckon you've made a mistake," said Tom, falling into the same language as Fred had adopted under similar circumstances. "I don't know you."

"I am aware of that, and I am not acquainted with you, and really this fact is the reason of my speaking to you."

"Well, you've got some cheek," said Tom.

"Yes, I've got some cheek; and now, young man, what have you got in that bundle?"

"None of your business," came the answer.

"None of your business," came the answer.
"Well, my young friend, I want to have a little talk with you."
Tom made up his mind that he had run across another thief, and he was annoyed.

"See here, stranger," he said, "I'm going to give you a bit of

"Sing it out, young fellow!"
"You just go off about your business, or you'll get hurt."
The stranger, who was an undersized man, merely laughed.
Tom had been so successful knocking fellows around, he began

to think he could just about knock down any city chap he came

"I want to have a little talk with you, young fellow."
Tom started to move away, when the stranger put his hand on

Tom was mad. He turned and made a lunge at the man, when suddenly he found himself sprawling on the sidewalk.

He did not realize how he had been hit, or how he had been

He did not realize how he had been hit, or how he had been downed, but down he had gone, and no mistake.

He rose to his feet, and the stranger said in a good-natured tone:

"Well, how do you like that?"

"I'll let you know," said Tom; and he made a dash at the stranger, when down he went again, as swiftly as though struck with club, and yet he was not hurt at all, only jarred a little, he went down as quick down so quick.

He again recovered his feet, when the stranger said, all the time

smiling in a good-natured manner:

"You have not told me yet how you liked it."
"I don't like it," said Tom.
"Well, that's natural."
"I don't like it because I don't know how you do it. You do it

Sasy."
"Yes, I've an easy way of doing it. Now will you go with

No, I won't."

"No, I won't.
"You want a little more fun, eh?"
"I won't stand any more of this."
"What will you do?"
Tom had an idea that if he could just once get hold of the stranger, he would show him, and watching a chance, he seized hold of

There followed an instant's swaying, and Tom went down, went

There followed an instant's swaying, and Tom went down, went down hard, and for a moment he lay there.

"Well, how is that?" said the stranger.

"I give it up," said Tom. "And now will you tell me why you came and assailed me?"

"You started in on me, sonny."

"Here comes a policeman! You git!"

"I am not going, sonny. I told you I wanted a few words with you."

"I don't like to do it," said Tom; "but I'll call the police." Call."

Tom gazed in amazement; the man was so cool and so skillful.
"Who are you?" asked Tom.
"Ah! you ought to have asked that question before."
"Well, I ask it now. Who are you?"

"I'm an officer."
"Get out! Where's your uniform?"
The stranger laughed, and said:

The stranger laughed, and said:

"That was a lucky question, sonny; and now listen to me: you must come along with me."

"Am I arrested?"

"Not exactly."

"Why do you want me to go with you?"

"I wish to ask you some questions."

"I can't see why an officer desires to ask me any questions."

"Well, listen, young fellow: I'm too much for you in a scuffle."

"Yes, you are—you are a good one."
"And I haven't used my club; now again, let me give you some more information: I am a detective."

"And what do you want of me?"
"I want you to account for being in the company of a professional thief."

# CHAPTER VII.

Tom was taken all aback, and in an undertone he exclaimed:

"By ginger! here's a go!"

The young farm lad had been fully two hours in the company of well-known thief, and on the most friendly terms with the rogue,

and he realized, when the officer asked him the question, that he had been piped.

You are really an officer?" said Tom.

"I am.

"The way you handled me leads me to believe your word."
"Thank you," said the detective, with an odd smile on his face.
"I had no business with that fellow," said Tom.

"Will you come and take a walk with me?"

The detective led Tom away, and at the proper moment asked:

Now tell me who you are, and where you come from, young fellow.

"Do you think I'm a thief?" asked Tom.
"I'll tell you what I think later on. Meantime answer my questions like a man.

tions like a man."

Tom proceeded and told the officer the whole truth, and when he had concluded his narrative the officer said:

"I believe every word you have told me. Indeed, I knew you were not a thief, and I piped you and that fellow Fred, because I thought he had set to rob you; but when I saw you so familiar with him I had my doubts, and when you went into that place and got the kit of clothes, I was led to believe that after all you were a decoy duck; but I'm now satisfied it's all right. Let me tell you something: that fellow Fred belongs to one of the most dangerous class of thieves in New York. They prey upon the innocent and unwary; they are the meanest scoundrels in the business; they take no chances, but come the sneak and confidence game."

"I reckon they are a regular band of house-breakers as well," said Tom.

What makes you think so?"
Fred wanted me to join the gang."

"Aha! so they have a regular organization?"

"So he told me."

And hold regular meetings?"

"They are to have a meeting to-night, he told me."
"Where?"

"I don't know; but he wanted me to meet him to-night and join their organization."

"Why did he want you to join?"

"He said I was a gamey fellow, just the kind they wanted."

"Are you honest?"

"I'll swear I am."

"You have no sympathy with those fellows who prey upon in-

nocent rurals when they come to the city?"
"Not a bit of sympathy with them."
"You'd like to see them cleaned out?"
"Yes, I would."

"Are you willing to help clean them out?"
"How can I help?"

"Join their organization." And become a thief?"

"What then?"

"Pick up all the points and give them away."

"Hek up all the points and give them away.

"Become an informer?"

"Well, yes," answered the detective, in a hesitating tone.

"I would not like to do that."

A moment the detective was thoughtful, but at length he said:

"When did he want you to meet him?"

A moment the detective was thoughtful, but at length he said:
"When did he want you to meet him?"
"To-night."
"Meet this fellow Fred; partly agree to join the gang; walk along with him, and finally conclude not to join."
"What good will I do by that move?"
"That is not for me to tell you; but you will make a friend at least, and possibly aid in breaking up the gang."
"You don't want me to go into the meeting?"
"No."
"Well, I'll do that much. And where am I to see you?"
"Where do you live?"

"Where do you live?"
Tom told the officer.

That's all I want to know. I will find you at the proper time."

"And see that I get into no scrape?"

"I will see that you get into no scrape."

"All right; I'll meet him and do as you say."

The detective gave Tom a few instructions and bid him good-

The detective gave Tom a new manual day.

Tom returned to his lodging place, and entering his room, sat down and thought over what he had agreed to do, and felt half-inclined to back out; but upon remembering that he had passed his word, he resolved to go through with the job.

About nine o'clock Tom went forth and strolled up to the place where he had agreed to meet the thief, and he was looking in at the several win lows when he heard a voice at his side. He turned and saw a veiled lady standing near him.

"How do you do?" said the girl.

"I beg your pardon," answered Tom, raising his hat. "I do not know you. I reckon you have made a mistake."

"No, I have not made a mistake."

"Do you think you know me?"

"What is my name?"

I do not know your name." "Then you do not know me."
"Yes, I do; I know your face."
"Where did you ever see me before?"
"I never did see you before."
"See here; what are you getting at, miss?"
"I see you are an honest man."

"I see here; what are you getting at, miss?

"I see you are an honest man."

"Thank you."

"And that is where I know you. I know you are kind and honest— generous young man. I am in trouble, and I am compelled to find a friend."

A suspicion ran through Tom's mind, and he said:

I recken you'll have to look further for the kind of friend you

want. Better strike some one who is a stranger in New York."
The girl turned away, and a sob fell upon Tom's ears.
The lad was indeed a generous and kind-hearted fellow, and it came over him that possibly he had made a mistake, and he walked after the girl and touched her on the shoulder.
She turned quickly, and as she did so, momentarily raised her veil, and disclosed just a glimpse of a very beautiful face.
The young man was staggered. The face was not only beautiful, but looked care-worn and anxious.

The young man was staggered. The face was not only beautiful, but looked care-worn and anxious.

"Are you really in trouble?" asked Tom.

"I am starving," came the response.

Tom glanced over the girl's apparel. She was plainly but neatly dressed, and there was nothing loud or flashy in her appearance.

Tom glanced at his watch, an old-fashioned gold watch given to him by his mother just as he was bidding her good-by.

He still had a few moments to spare, and he said:

"Come with me, and I will get you something to eat."

There was a restaurant near by, and Tom led the way toward it, but the girl touched his arm, drew back, and said:

"Don't go in there!"

Again a suspicion ren through Term's mind.

Again a suspicion ran through Tom's mind, and in a sharp tone he demanded:

Why not?"

"The man who keeps that place is a brute."

" How do you know

"I went to him before I met you and asked for something to eat, and he pushed me into the street and would have struck me, only I

The explanation was satisfactory enough.

"I will take you to a place kept by a good, honest woman, who once gave me a meal and some excellent advice."

"All right, we will go to the good woman's."

The girl led Tom along and had little to say until they reached the eating-place, which was about as mean and dirty a place as Tom had ever entered in his life.

When they were seated at the table, the girl said:

"I am so faint; will you order a little wine or beer?"

"I will order some beer for you, if you think you need it, but I reckon a little tea will be better."

"Don't you ever drink beer?" asked the girl, in an innocent

"Well, I never did until the other night when a man made me drink some, and it did seem to do me good."
"Who was the man?"
"A gentleman who is agent for a benevolent society."
"Why didn't he provide for you permanently?"

"He has promised to do so; but he will be compelled to wait until after a meeting of the trustees, and meantime I may starve. Oh, sir! let me tell you my story."

The girl proceeded and told one of the most heart-rending tales

of wrong, suffering, injustice, and fiendish abuse of innocence he had ever listened to.

Indeed he had never read of anything half so horrible in all his life; tears filled his eyes, and when, in the excess of the girl's emotion, she threw himself upon his bosom, he thought the action most natural. Indeed, as the saying goes, "he was all broke up;" all his warmest sympathies were aroused.

The meal, meantime, had been brought in and set before them, and a mean-looking supper it was; at the same instant two men appeared in the outer store.

The girl cast her eyes upon them, and said:

"Oh, there is one of my enemies now! I must not be seen or he

The girl rose and passed away from the table, and the two men walked into the rear room where Tom sat before the untasted meal. They looked sharply at our hero, and one of them said, address-

ing his companion: Is that the chap?"

The second man pretended to study Tom a moment, and said: "It looks like him, but I do not think it's the fellow."

The first speaker approached Tom, and said:

The first speaker approached Tom, and said:

"See here, young fellow; you take a fool's advice and get away from here as quick as you can, and you will save yourself trouble!"

"I reckon I'll go when I get ready."

"All right; I've given you a little friendly advice."

The man reached over and whispered something in Tom's ear.

The lad turned pale, and rising from his seat, went forward to pay for the meal that had not been eaten. The woman said:

"You owe me nothing; you didn't eat anything. It's all right."

Tom hurried out, and had proceeded but a couple of squares when a hand was laid on his shoulder, and a rough-looking man, resembling in his general appearance a regular corner rowdy, said:

"Hallo! where are you going?"

"None of your business!"

"Well, ye naden't be so huffy about it! And will ye tell a man

"Well, ye naden't be so huffy about it! And will ye tell a man the toime?"

Tom put his hand in his pocket to feel for his watch. Alas! his father's old-fashioned time-piece was gone.

father's old-fashioned time-piece was gone.

The young man gazed aghast.

Tom looked at the man in a suspicious manner, but remembered the fellow had not been within four feet of him.

"My watch is gone!" ejaculated Tom.

"Did ye have one?"

Tom turned to go away; the most terrible suspicions were running through his mind. He put his hand in his pocket to feel for his porte-monnoie; his money was gone; eleven dollars of his mother's penny-by-penny savings.

"Heavens!" evclaimed the youth, in an undertone. "Have I been robbed?"

The man who had addressed him spoke again, but without the least intonation characteristic of the brogue, and in tones which struck Tom as familiar, he said:

"Well you've leasned a good lesson?"

Well, you've learned a good lesson."

Who are you?" "The detective."

"I've been robbed."
"I know it. I saw that girl pick you up."
"And you knew she was a thief?" "And you would not tell me, but permitted me to lose my watch

and money? I permitted you to learn a lesson."

"It is a costly one to me."
"It is a costly one to me."
"No; here's your watch and here's your money."
The detective handed Tom's missing articles over to him and the

The detective handed from s missing articles over to him and the young man gazed aghast.

The detective laughed, and said:

"It's all right. As I said I saw the girl pick you up. She is one of the smartest workers in her line in the city."

"Well, she is!" said Tom. "How did you recover my valuables?"

Easy enough. I followed you. I know the house, and when she left you she slipped out through a back door, then through an alley-way, and came to the street. I met her at the alley-way,

and said:

"'Came, Kate, pass it all over to me.'
"She knows me, and passed it over, and was glad to get away without being arrested. I reckon it's the first time she was ever caught dead to rights."

caught dead to rights."

"Why didn't you arrest her?"

"For two reasons. I've got another job on hand to-night, and I've got that girl under a shadow in another matter. She may prove useful to me, so I let her go; and then, again, I wouldn't like to have you sent to jail."

"Why should I be sent to jail?"

"For being such a fool as to be robbed."

"Det they could be rightly in the statement of the statement of the statement of the statement."

"For being such a fool as to be robbed."

"Do they send the victims to jail in New York?"

"Well, they send them to the House of Detention as witnesses; they might as well send them to jail. It's only in the case where the victims have no permanent place of residence in the city."

"You were kind to let her go."

"Well, yes; as long as I got your things back. I can nip her when I want her, and you've learned a lesson. You're a good fellow, and you'll be many smart one when you get the edge off and get your eye-teeth cut. But now come; remember, we've business on hand."

"Yes, and see here: I've made up my mind to do something."
"What will you do?"
"Go clean through in this scheme to-night."

#### CHAPTER VIII.

THE detective laughed, and said: "You're mad!"

The detective laughed, and said:

"You're mad!"

"Yes, I am mad; and I am willing to go any lengths to break up these gangs. Why, just to think! that girl told me a story that made the tears run down my cheeks, and, when blinded by sympathetic tears, she robbed me!"

"Tom, it's marvelous the tricks to which thieves resort in our great cities! It's a new game all the time, and I am sorry to say that men of real talent become thieves, and women of education and possessed of rare beauty, become thieves and blackmailers."

"Why is it?" asked Tom. "How do you explain it? Couldn't they do better as honest people?"

"Certainly they could, every time, as, sooner or later, every thief—indeed, every criminal—is brought to punishment. \*Crime never succeeds\* in the long run. And now I will explain. Men fall into crime through yielding to some minor temptation in the first place." The detective fixed his eyes on Tom in a peculiar manner as he spoke, and delivered his opinion with singular emphasis. "Yes, it's some minor temptation, as I said, originally. Say they take a drink, and indulge in a liftle gambling for fun. Well, at first it may be for fun; in the end it becomes a passion; and then young men, to indulge the passion, commit a little crime—pilfer a small sum from the cash-drawer. Why, Tom, I know of one money-changer who, in the course of a year, purchased ten thousand dollars worth of postage-stamps at a discount from boys,\* and the chances are from those lads our criminal classes will be recruited for the next ten years! With the women, love of dress leads them to the first false step, and so it goes on. I tell you we detectives could tell terrible tales out of school, were we to open up today an undiscovered crime. But now, my lad, to the business we have on hand to-night. You say you are willing to chance "Yes, I am."

"I would not ask you to do it, but if you are willing to chance

Yes, I am."

"I would not ask you to do it, but if you are willing to chance it, you may do the public a great good in at least aiding to break up one dangerous gang; and now go ahead and meet the fellow

Tom sauntered to the Bowery, and a few moments later was joined by the confidence man.
"Well, old boy, you're on hand. What have you made up your

mind to do?"
"I'll tell you: I think I'll work my rackets alone."
Our young here had been tutered by the detective, and as our readers will learn, he proved himself an apt scholar.

"Do you want to make a big strike?"

"I don't like your style of working, Fred."
"Come down and see some of the lads."
"All right; I don't mind; but I won't promise to join."
"We'll take the elevated."

Tom was smart enough to linger at the entrance to the elevated road, so that the detective would have a good opportunity of seeing the direction they were taking.

The young men entered a train, and Tom saw the detective board

the same car.

The three rode to Harlem, when Fred went to the river and unmoored a boat, and they pulled over the dark waters until they came in sight of a long, low-roofed building right on the shore of the river; indeed, the building was partly erected on spiles.

"Here is where we get off," said Fred.

Tom looked around to take in all the bearings, and at the same time he watched to learn if the detective had followed. He saw nothing of the latter, but as he had started in on the racket he followed Fred.

He was ushered into a boat-house. There were only two roughlooking fellows present, who eyed our young hero in a suspicious

manner.

"Here's an old pal of mine," said Fred; "his name is Tom Cary, and he's a daisy."

Fred went on to explain to Tom that the gang were organized as a boat-club, but the boat business was all a blind, as he expressed it; and as Tom discovered later on, the boat-house was a deserted building the roughs had temporarily secured, and their occupancy of it, as our readers will learn, was very brief.

Half an hour passed and two more young fellows joined the party, to whom Tom was introduced.

The fellows appeared silent and sullen, and seemingly did not fancy Tom's presence; the farm-boy was quick to discover the latter fact, but he kept his mouth shut and his eyes and ears open, while a consultation took place between Fred and the other four

while a consultation took place between Fred and the other four

The consultation appeared to result satisfactorily, as one of the four, who appeared to be a leader, came to Tom, and said:
"Young fellow, do you want to go with us?"
"That depends," answered Tom, promptly.

"On what?"

"Well, what do you want me to go into?"

"Well, what do you want me to go into?"

"We don't open up our business only to friends."

"I'm not asking you to open anything up."

"Will you go in with us? That's what I'm asking you."

"I won't go into anything blind."

"What are you doing here, anyhow?"

"Ask Fred."

The fellow stepped away from Tom, and drawing Fred and his

The fellow stepped away from from, and drawing fred and his pals aside, said:

"What's this you're brought here?"

"A good man, I tell you," said Fred.

"Well, it's just as I thought at first. This fellow is a decoy duck, and he'll just give the whole thing away."

"How do you know?"

"Well, I know; I'm no fool. And now see here, we've got to get rid of this fellow or our jig's up. He's a gump, he is."

Fred appeared staggered.

Fred appeared staggered.

"I'll get him away," he said.

"That won't do; he'll squeal on us, sure. Now see here, dead men tell no tales."

men tell no tales."
Fred turned pale.
"We can fix him, and we must."
"How will you do it?"
"We'll take him in the boat—Ricks and I—and if he gets ashore he'll swim—swim it."
"Mebbe he is a swimmer."
"Is he? Well, he'll sleep in the river to-night, and don't you

forget it!"

The men arranged a plan which will be detailed as our narrative advances. The man came to Tom, and said:

"You don't want to lay in with us?"

"Well, I don't think I do. I don't like you."

Tom was brave and reckless, and did not know his danger; his lack of fear came of inexperience.

"We'll take you down to the landing and you git!"

"I'm ready to go; I did not ask to come here."

"I know you didn't, and that's lucky for you;" and turning to his companions, the man said: "Come, Ricks, you and I will take the cub down to the landing. We've no use for him here."

Tom would have declined their good services, but the fact was, he knew nothing about the locality, and could not have found his way back.

He did not know whether he was on an island or the shore of the mainland. He was practically all at sea indeed. Meantime, the two men got out a flat-bottomed boat, commonly

Come, Gumpy, 's said the man who acted as leader and spokesman.

I'm ready,'' said Tom.

"I'm ready," said Tom.

"It's lucky you are ready."

Tom got into the boat, little dreaming of the foul murder that was contemplated by the cold-blooded wretches.

As the party rowed down the river, Ricks said in a fierce tone:

"Look here, Gumpy, you had a good deal of gall to come along and try to join our boat-club."

"I didn't want to join your old boat-club."

The men kept talking and rowing along, and Tom began to think it was taking much longer to return to the landing than it had taken to proceed to the boat-house, and he said:

"Where are you fellows taking me, anyhow?"

"To the lower landing,"
"You can land me right here. I'm
wish to put you to any more trouble. I'm much obliged, and I do not

Tom noticed that the river had grown much broader, and that the current was much swifter and the water much rougher. Indeed, he did not know that the rascals had pulled out into the East

Suddenly a suspicion rushed through Tom's mind, and he gazed around for the first time in a startled manner

At the same moment, one of the men exclaimed

"Great Casar! the boat is sinking!"
The man told the truth. The water was rushing in at the bottom at a mad rate, and the boat began to settle.
At the same instant one of the men seized an oar and made at terrible stroke at the farm-lad.

The latter dodged the blow, which would have crushed in his skull, and at the same instant sprung into the water, going down deep and coming up some distance from where the boat had been.

The night was dark, but as Tom came to the surface, he saw a boat with four men in it, and the whole conspiracy passed through his mind. The men had made an attempt to murder him; the boat had been purposely uncorked, and all the time a second boat had been following the scow to rescue the two thieves, while our hero was to be left to drown.

Tom was an expert swimmer, and had he known the shortest route to land, could have made the distance.

He lay floating on the water, when he saw the boat with four men in it rapidly disappear in the darkness, and almost at the same instant a second boat, with only two men in it, came from a lateral

Tom made no outcry, but swam toward the second boat, and an instant later heard the exclamation:
"There's a man in the water!"

The boat was pulled toward him, and Tom was assisted into it, when he heard a familiar voice exclaim:

"Well, in the name of all that's strange and desperate, I did not dream of this! Tom, is it you?"

"Yes, it's myself sure enough."

"How did you get in the river?"

"They unplugged the boat, and let it sink."

"Ah, I see! And another boat took up the murderers?"
"Yes, sir."

"Well, it has been a close shave, Tom, my boy."
The detective pulled toward the shore, and explained to Tom his own presence.

He had followed Tom and Fred to the boat-house. He had laid low, and when the men started off in the boat, he supposed they were going on some plundering expedition, and he followed in his boat, being assisted by an aid whom he had brought with him.

They had followed until just before the attempted murder, when a steamer, coming down the river, had cut off the two boats, and it

They had followed that just before the attempted murder, when a steamer, coming down the river, had cut off the two boats, and it was while the steamer was between them that the attempted murder took place, and the thieves' rescue boat had disappeared before the detective got around.

The discovery of Tom in the water was practically an accident.

"All's well that ends well," said the detective, who was known as Carlyle, the terror of the confidence men.

This man Carlyle was a native of the South, a man who was noted for his courage, coolness, and wonderful personal strength, and a new addition to the special detective force, brought in because he was personally unknown to the special class of criminals whom he had been selected to run down, and during his experience in New York he had made some excellent captures.

"Tom," he said, "you are a game young fellow. You have made a friend; you have acted like a hero, and some day you shall have the benefit of it."

"I am very glad, sir, to have won your good opinion; but I fear I have not accomplished much."

"My boy, you have accomplished a great deal; you have done all I desired, and more; and now relate to me all that transpired in the boat-house."

the boat-house.

the boat-house."

Tom recounted all that had transpired, and also accurately described the men whom he had met there.

"That's good," said Card le; "and now, my boy, for a week or two I want you to lay low. Fred must not see you. I want those fellows to think you were drowned."

"All right, sir, just as you say."

"You're looking for a position?"

"Yes, sir."

"Well, here is my address. Come some day and see me; and now I think your eye-teeth are well cut, and you can keep out of trouble."

"I think I can, sir. By George! I've learned as much in a few days as it would take a fellow under ordinary circumstances a life-time to learn."

"You're right; and now, one word more: if you change your residence let me know."

"I will, sir."
"Does Fred know where you hang out?"

"No, sir."
"Remember and avoid him."
"I will, sir."
"Don't make any acquaintances; keep to yourself for a month or two, until you see your way clear. And now, my lad. here is twenty dollars which you have well earned."
"Thank you, sir," said Tom.
"You will hear from me in a few days."
"All right, sir."

" All right, sir.

Tom was put on the elevated road. His clothes were pretty well squeezed out, and he managed to escape special observation.

The lad reached his lodgings and was soon in his hed.

On the fellowing morning be took his clothes to a tailor and had them boned out, and later on in the afternoon his appearance did not betray his experience in the water the night before.

Tom made up his mind to look for a position, and, singularly enough, luck favored him, and strange incidents followed.

#### CHAPTER IX.

THREE days passed, and Tom saw nor heard nothing from the detective; but he had seen a strange paragraph in one of the morning papers, and he had a fancy that in a remote manner the article

ing papers, and he had a fancy that in a remote manner the article bore upon his own startling adventure.

The article stated that an accident had occurred on the river. Three young men were in a boat; the boat was upset or sunk, and one of the three young men was drowned; his body had been recovered by a passing schooner before life was wholly extinct, but he had died a few minutes after his rescue from the water.

The article also hinted that there was a suspicion of foul play, and that the body had not been identified.

"This account is all very strange," muttered the youth, as he read it over. "Hang it!" he added, "the circumstances would indicate that it was my adventure; but this schooner business, and the death, and non-identification of the body I do not understand. I reckon the reporter has caught on to a rumor and has made up the rest of the story."

the rest of the story."

We will here state that later on the mystery was explained, and

Tom learned that the detective, Carlyle, was responsible for the statement as it appeared in the paper.

The detective wanted it to appear that Tom had been drowned, so as to lull the thieves into a sense of security, to enable him the better to get upon their track and close in on them.

In the same paper Tom read an advertisement that arrested his

attention:

"Wanted—A smart, active, shrewd lad; a good and rapid penman; a boy who has no bad habits, and is willing to work hard for fair compensation; a lad from the country preferred. Apply," etc.

"A young lad from the country preferred!" soliloquized Tom. "Well, I can fill that bill. I am a good, rapid writer. I am willing to work, and I am from the country. I reckon I'll call on that

Tom had become pretty well acquainted with the city, so that he could go from place to place without fear of losing his way.

Indeed, New York is the only large city in the world where a stranger can soon learn to go about without fear of being lost.

Tom found the building down near the Tombs, and ascending a narrow pair of stairs to the top floor, he found the number of the room where he was to apply.

The lad rapped at the door, and a coarse voice from within called

out: Tom opened the door and entered a dark, dingy suite of offices. There were two rooms, a large office opening into a little cubbyhole of a place, and at a desk in the latter room sat a man with a marked face and singular figure.

"Well, what do you want?" demanded the man at the desk in a

sharp voice.
"I came in answer to an advertisement I saw in the paper."
"You think you possess the necessary qualifications?"

"Yes, sir.

"You are a quick, legible penman?"

"You ain't afraid of work?"
"No, sir."

"Where are you from?" Tom named his native place. "Got any recommendations?"

" No, sir

" How in thunder do you expect to get a situation without recom-

Tom did not like the man's appearance, and did not think the place would suit him, so he could afford to be independent, and he

answered:
"I am not looking for a position in thunder; I'm after a job in

New York

A smile broke over the man's face, and he eyed Tom more critic-

ally. How long have you been in New York?"

"About two weeks."
"What have you been doing since your arrival?"
"Getting into and out of scrapes most of the time."
The man's glance became more concentrated.
"How did you come to make up your mind to settle in New

I ran away from home."
And this is your recommendation?"

The man smiled, and said: "You say you have been engaged getting in and out of scrapes since your arrival in New York? What scrapes have you been

"Well, being a countryman, I've had a raid on me."
The man laughed right out.
"And how did you come out?"
"Ahead every time,"
"Ahead every time,"

Have you had any fights?" Yes, sir."

"Been locked up?"

"Yes, sir."
"How did you get out?" "I put the doorman in my place in the cell and skipped." The man gazed at Tom in amazement.

Are you a good liar?

So you want a situation?"

"Yes, sir."
"Would you like to study law?"
"What chance has a young man to make headway?"
"I think you would make headway, my lad."

"Why do you think so, sir?

"Because you've the right kind of snap in you."
"I must earn enough to take care of myself. I've no capital."
"That is an indirect question as to what your wages will be?"

"Yes, sir."
"I will pay you twelve dollars a month for the first month; and if you give satisfaction, I will raise it to sixteen. Within three months you may attain to a salary of twenty dollars a month."

"And do you think I will suit, sir?"
"You might; but you have no recommendations."

"I think my candor, sir, ought to serve as a recommendation."
The lawyer was thoughtful for a moment, and at length said:
"See here, young man, I will give you a trial."
Tom little dreamed at the moment to what a grave denouement his

flippant conversation with the lawyer was destined to lead.
"You will try me, sir?"
"Yes."

"When am I to begin?" "To-morrow morning.

"All right, sir, I will try it."
"What is your name?"
"Tom Cary."

"One more word. Do you drink or gamble?"
"No, sir."
"Go to church?"

"I intend to attend church, sir."

"I intend to attend church, sir."

"Well, come to-morrow at eight."

Tom left the lawyer's office and was walking up Center Street, past the Tombs, when he felt a hand on his shoulder. He turned and recognized Carlyle.

"Halloo, Tom! What are you doing down this way?"

"I've just secured a job."

"What at?"

"Whith a lawyer, an odd sort of a cove\_sir."

"With a lawyer, an odd sort of a cove, sir."
"What's his name?"
"Dugan."

A shadow fell over the detective's face, and after a moment's thought, he said:

Philo Dugan?"

"That's the name on the door, sir."
"How did you come to go there?"
"I saw an advertisement in the paper."

Have you commenced work?

"I commence to-morrow." Again a shadow fell over the detective's face, and for some moments he appeared lost in deep thought; but at length he said:
"You have strange luck."
"How so, sir?"

"I won't tell you now; but look here, Tom, are you sure of yourself?"
"Whether I'll suit him, do you mean?"

"Whether I'll suit him, do you mean?"
"No; can you keep out of trouble?"
"What trouble, sir?"
"Mr. Dugan is a pretty smart lawyer."
The detective put a peculiar emphasis on the word smart.
"Is he a bad man, sir?"
"That I can not say; but he's a keener! Tell me all that passed when you applied for the position."
Tom related all that had occurred, and then the detective laughed heartily, and said:

heartily, and said:
"You went at him the right way, Tom, to get the job."

"Well, sir, if I had been anxious to get it, I should not have gone to work just as I did."

"It may be just the thing, having you in that office; but you must keep your eyes and ears open. Mark in your mind all that occurs there; note the appearance of every one that enters, and remember all that you hear said."

"This is strange advice, sir."

"Well, it's the only way to learn business ways, Tom."

"Ah, I see, sir."

"You meet me here day after to morrow. Do not look for the

"Ah, I see, sir."
"You meet me here day after to-morrow. Do not look for me, nor recognize me until I speak to you, Tom. I can't tell you all; but there may be fate in this matter, after all."
"What matter, sir?"
"Your entering the service of Philo Dugan. Good-day, my lad; remember, day after to-morrow."
"All right, sir; I will be on hand."

#### CHAPTER X.

Upon the following morning Tom entered upon his position with his new employer, who gave him the usual directions as to his duties as an office-boy, and set him later in to copy some legal

papers.

Our young farm-hand was an excellent penman, and a very rapid writer, and he evidently performed his work to the entire satisfaction of Mr. Dugan.

Meantime, the boy had remembered the words of Carlyle, the de-

tective, and in a covert manner he studied the face, actions, and words of his employer

Mr. Dugan went over into court during the forenoon, and did not return until after one o'clock, and during his absence a gentleman

called at the office and inquired for him.

The inquirer was a man handsomely dressed, evidently a foreigner, and possessed a sinister face, crowned with a cruel and relent-

less expression.

Tom took an instantaneous and unaccountable dislike to the

man. "Where is Mr. Dugan?"

"Gone over to court, sir."

"Who are you?"
"His new clerk, sir."
"Ah, yes; how long have you been here?"
"This is my first day, sir."

"Ah, let me see: what is your pay?"
"Twelve dollars a month."
"Did you know Mr. Dugan before you came to work for him?"
"I never saw him until yesterday."

"When do you expect Mr. Dugan back?"
"About noon, sir."

A moment the stranger was silent and thoughtful, but at length he said

"You're a poor boy?"
"You're a poor boy?"
"I'm working for my living."
"Humph! Let me see. Can you keep a secret?"
"I am not a blabber, sir."

"That sounds good, yes, that sounds good; now see here, lad, if I say something to you, can I feel assured that you will not repeat what I say?

You had better wait and make Mr. Dugan your confidant." "That will not do. See here, you want to make money hon-

"I'd like to employ you."
"I've just entered Mr. Dugan's employment."

"You can earn his salary and mine, too, my lad. Can I trust you?'

"I am trustworthy, sir."
"Ah, that will do; that is all the promise I require."
Tom did not know what to make of the man.

"You have not fallen in love with Mr. Dugan yet, young man?"
"I know nothing of him, sir."
"Well, I'll tell you: Mr. Dugan is employed to do some business Yes, sir."

"He is stranger to me, practically."

"Yes, sir.

"Ah, well, I'll tell you. I have not full confidence in him."

"I'd like to double your pay and have you-"

The man stopped.
"Do what, sir?" demanded Tom.
"Watch Mr. Dugan and report to me!" came the singular an-

Tom answered promptly: "All right, sir."

The farm-lad had revolved the strange warning of the detective in his mind, and he was learning to be quite a sharp chap, practically, as he was naturally.

Our young hero was a lad possessed of keen powers of observation, and he possessed also an analytical mind, and he was satisfied to the accommon corresponding that sengeling was up. He did fied, to use a common expression, that something was up. He did not mean to play false to his employer, and he answered as he did merely to draw the visitor out, and then decide upon his own course

of action.
"You will enter my service?"
"Well, I think I might as well make all the money I can. I "That's the way to talk! And now, do not mention my visit here this morning. I will come here later on and talk with Mr. Dugan, and he must not know that you have talked with me, and in good time I will give you your instructions."

"All right, sir; but am I to let him know you called?"

"Yes. Say I called and inquired for him, and say that I will be here at two o'clock."

The visitor left the office, and Tom set to thinking.

"Hang it!" he said, "there's some deviltry going on here. I am satisfied my employer is an unscrupulous man, and that fellow who just left here is a scoundrel—a rich one, too, I take it, and he is up to some game. Well, well, I've my instructions from a man whom I know to be honest, and, by ginger! I'll keep my eyes and ears open!"

At one o'clock Mr. Dugan returned, and his first question was:
"Did any one call, Tom?"
"Yes, sir; a gentleman was here about eleven."
"Did he leave his name?"

" No, sir.'

"No, sir."
"You must always get the name of a caller, Tom."
"I will in future, sir."
"Describe the visitor."
Tom did so accurately."
"Ah, it was Brinsmaid." muttered Mr. Dugan. "Did he say he would come again, Tom?"
"Mr. Brinsmaid said he would call about two o'clock."
The lawyer looked at Tom sharply, and said:
"You told me he did not leave his name."
"You just named him, sir."
"Oh, yes; I had forgotten: you have quick ears. I will remember that," mentally observed the lawyer.

At two o'clock Mr. Brinsmaid called, and after the two gentlemen had exchanged salutations, our hero's employer said:
"Tom, you can go and get some lunch."
Tom picked up his hat and left the office.
He returned in about half an hour and heard loud talking in the office, and concluded not to go in, but after a few moments the door opened and Mr. Brinsmaid came forth.
He saw Tom, made a cautionary movement, and motioned the lad to follow him.
Tom followed the man to the foot of the estimated to the lower transfer of the estimated transfer.

Tom followed the man to the foot of the stairs, when Mr. Brinsmaid said:

"I must see you to-night, my lad."
"All right, sir. Where shall I come?"
"Be in front of the Fifth Avenue Hotel at nine o'clock tonight.

All right, sir."

Mr. Brinsmaid went away and Tom returned to the office. He saw at a glance that his employer had been greatly excited, and he was muttering to himself at the moment our hero entered the office,

was muttering to himself at the moment our here entered the olice, while at the same time he was arranging some papers.

One of the papers fell to the floor; the lawyer did not pick it up, and Tom, seeing that it was an envelope, concluded it was an empty one, and did not call Mr. Dugan's attention to his omission.

A few moments later the lawyer left the office, and left word with Tom to brush up before he left, and be on hand the next morning at the usual hour.

"Will you return, sir, this afternoon?"

"No."

"How late shall I remain here?"

"Until four o'clock."

Mr. Dugan went out, and Tom set to cleaning up the office.

He picked up the envelope that had fallen to the floor, and discovered that there was a letter inside. The lad drew forth the note, and read:

"DEAR DUGAN-I rely upon you to see that I am neither robbed nor murdered.

" Yours, J. A. DRAYTON."

The note was addressed to Dugan, and the word murdered was underscored.

Tom placed the letter in an unlocked drawer, and completed his

work, and half an hour later left the office.

That same evening the boy started out for a stroll, intending at a later hour to be on hand to keep his appointment with Mr. Brins-

He had gone but a few steps from his lodging-house when he met Carlyle

Halloo, Tom! I was just going to see you."

"Halloo, Ton! I was just going "Well, here I am, sir."
"Yes. How do you like your new place?"
"A queer place, sir."
"How so?"

"I've been employed at double salary to watch my employer."

"I've been employed at double salary to watch my employer." The detective stared, and ejaculated:
"What do you mean, lad?"
Tom related the circumstances attending the visits of Mr. Brinsmaid to the office, and when he had concluded, Carlyle said:
"Well, this beats Old Harry! Tom, you're in luck! You couldn't have acted better if you had been under full instructions. You'll make your fortune, lad."
"That's what I'm after."
"Where are you to meat Pringmaid?"

That's what the greet,
Where are you to meet Brinsmaid?"
Tom named the place,
"Keep your appointment, and remember all that the man tells

Tom told about the letter he had found, and a shadow passed over the detective's face, but he made no comment.
"Let me see. You are to meet Brinsmaid at nine o'clock?"

"What do you think of the man?"
"He is bad."

"He is bad."
"What do you think of Dugan?"
"He is bad."
"You are a lad of quick discernment. And now, Tom, when you leave Brinsmaid, come here and meet me."
"I'll be here!"
"What is your estimate of me. Tom?"

"What is your estimate of me, Tom?"

"What is your estimate of me, Tom?"
"I think you're an honest man."
"Good! And now, Tom, let me tell you: accident has made you an actor in a very important life-drama. You may do much good and make a fortune."
"Both agreeable prospects, sir."
"Yes, it is an extraordinary thing that a lad of your parts should have drifted right into this niche. Proceed as you have started out, and you are all right."

out, and you are all right."

The detective went away, and Tom continued his walk, indulging strange thoughts and fancies, and at the appointed time he appeared in front of the Fifth Avenue Hotel, prepared to meet his

Tom walked up and down in front of the hotel for some time. when he felt a touch upon his arm, and turning, beheld Mt. Brins-

maid. "You are here?"

"Yes, sir."
"We will take a walk."
The two started down Twenty-third Street.
"What is your name?" "Tom Cary?"
"You've been a pretty hard boy in your time, Tom?"
"Sir!" ejaculated our hero. you are a hard aut, or you would not be working for that scamp!"
"I do not know that Mi. Dugau is a scamp."
"Oh, no, you are very innocent; but that is neither here nor "Yes, sir."
"Yes, sir."

"Yes, sir."
"Listen to me. I am about to intrust a secret to you, and if you betray me I'll kill you!"
"Kill me, sir? You do not mean that?"
The man drew a revolver, showed it to Tom; indeed, shoved it against the lad's ear, and said:
"Yes, I do mean what I say. I'll kill you if you betray me."
"I reckon I do not wish to work for you, sir."
"Yes, you do wish to work for me; and if you do your work well, I'll pay you two hundred and fifty dollars."
This time Tom had his instructions, and knew just how to act.
"What do you want me to do, sir?"
"I'll tell you. Dugan is a rogue! He is a scamp! He has

"I'll tell you. Dugan is a rogue! He is a scamp! He has taken advantage of my confidence in him! He has robbed me!"
"Why do you not have him arrested, sir?"
"Simply because he has robbed me in such a slick manner I can not prove it."

not prove it."

"Ah, I see!"

"Now, then, Tom Cary, you can aid me to get my own back, and at the same time earn two hundred and fifty dollars honestly. I am a rich man. Dugan has had charge of some property for me, and I intrusted to him some papers. He has never returned them. He claims he has lost them, but I know he tells me a falsehood.

He claims he has lost them, but I know he tells me a falsehood. And now I want you to aid me in recovering those papers!"

"How can I aid you, sir?"

"You can pretend to be very simple and innocent. You can win Mr. Dugan's confidence and watch him, and see just where he keeps his private papers, and at the proper time you can quietly take possession of them."

"Steal them, sir?"

"No, sir; I would never ask any one to steal for me. I mean you can secure them and restore them to their rightful owner."

"How do I know you are the rightful owner?"

"Because I tell you I am."

"That is no proof."

"Ah, you are getting to be quite a lawyer already, I see; but

"That is no proof."

"Ah, you are getting to be quite a lawyer already, I see; but never mind, call it what you please. I want those papers, and I must have them; and I will pay you two hundred and fifty dollars reward for restoring them to me."

"What papers are they?"

"I will tell you later on; and now will you aid me?"

"I will think it over, sir."

"That won't do; and now mark my words: you are only a boy, but I have seen fit to make a confident of you, and if you betray

That won't do; and how mark my words: you are only a boy, but I have seen fit to make a confidant of you, and if you betray me I will do you harm."

"You must not threaten me, sir."

Brinsmaid became conciliatory.

"This is a simple matter, lad, and you will make a friend for life. I am a rich man; Dugan is a poor, penniless devil. Whom will you serve?"

will you serve?"

"So I'm serving the devil now, eh?"

The man laughed, and answered:

"Yes, you are."
"If he is a devil, I'd rather serve you."
"Boy, you are smarter than I thought. You may become very useful to me, and if you do, your fortune is made. Well, will you take the ich?" take the job?"
"I'll find out what you desire."

"Then I may report."
"That will do; and to show you that I mean to treat you well, here is twenty dollars."

Tom took the money for reasons we will explain as our narrative progresses, and agreed to meet Mr. Brinsmaid on the following

evening, and report progress.

As stated, Tom had received instructions just how to act. The lad had learned that his friend Carlyle had some interest in the two men, Dugan and Brinsmaid, and he had learned, further, that some scheme was in progress.

The lad had not caught on to the real game, but he felt he could

The lad had not caught on to the real game, but he ten he could trust himself to steer straight.

The lad's thoughts were strange enough as he walked back to the place where he was to meet the detective.

To think he had not been in New York, at the time, one month, and he was full of business; indeed, had become an important factor in a great life-drama.

He proceeded on his way, and met the detective.

"Well, Tom, did you see your man?"

"Yes gir."

"Yes, sir."
"What did he tell you?"
Tom related the whole conversation verbatim, and the detective uttered several expressive exclamations during the recital, and when our hero had concluded, Carlyle said:
"Tom, you must secure the papers."
"And give them to Mr. Brinsmaid?"
"No; give them to me."
"I thought so!" was the bright lad's rejoinder.
Carlyle, the detective, smiled.
"You thought so, eh?" he said.
"Yes, I did."
"What led you to think so, my lad?"

"What led you to think so, my lad?"
"Well, I'm getting an idea of this thing."
"All right; you have already settled a very important question, and I want you to carry out Brinsmaid's instructions, as far as watching Dugan is concerned, and when you make a discovery, do not result to him, but to me." not report to him, but to me.

" All right, sir."

"All right, sir."

"And now, Tom, I've something else to tell you: I am indebted to you for a little job I have on hand to-night, and I hope to catch the chaps who sought to drown you. I've followed up the clews you gained for me. I have laid for those chaps, and to-night they go upon a raid, and I hope to catch the whole gang dead to rights; and if I do I'll send them up for ten or fifteen years apiece, dead sure! and it's through you I got on to them so soon."

"I'm glad to have been of assistance to you, sir."

"That's all right; and now you lay for Dugan, and you may accomplish more important work than you expect; indeed, your advent in New York appears most providential; you appear to run into the right channels like a ferret chasing rats through the partitions of a house. When are you to see Brinsmaid again?"

"To-morrow night."

To-morrow night.

The detective gave the youth some instructions, and the two parted, agreeing to meet at the same place upon the following night subsequent to Tom's meeting with Brinsmaid.

There was one remarkable aspect to the affair as it stood. Tom had not asked any questions.

He was prepared to wait for information or find out for himself.

#### CHAPTER XI.

Tom sauntered on down the Bowery, and a bare footed girl came toward him with extended palm. The girl was about thirteen. Her face was clean, but her clothing was miserable.

She had lovely eyes and delicate features, and the lad's heart was touched. He dropped a quarter in her hand and walked away, and the next moment heard a low cry, and the little girl came running along and seized hold of his arm.

"Let me walk with you a little way?" she said. "I know you

are honest and kind."

Tom was mad. His suspicions were at once aroused. He remembered his previous experience, when a supposed object of suffering had told him a harrowing tale that caused the tears to start

The ready eyes, and while he wept she had robbed him.

When the innocent-faced girl came and caught hold of his arm he made up his mind that it was another game, and he was mad, indeed, the lad ceased to take any stock in innocent faces.

He shook the girl off, and told her to go about her business.

"Just let me walk with you to the corner," said the girl, in a pleading voice.

pleading voice.

Tom's suspicions were more and more aroused, and he rudely

Tom's suspicions were more and more aroused, and he rudely shook the girl off, and as he did so he caught a glimpse of her face, on which appeared an expression of agony and terror.

"Ah, they all play it so well," muttered the farm-lad, and he hurried on, but a moment later he turned to look round, and he saw the girl struggling in the grasp of a rough-looking man.

"I wonder it it's a game?" muttered the lad.

It chanced no one was near at the moment. He ran back, and arrived just as the man was hurrying the girl into a carriage.

Tom, on the instant, decided that all was not right; a second suspicion entered his mind.

picion entered his mind.

picion entered his mind.

He ran forward and dealt the man a staggering blow on the temple; the fellow reeled over and fell, releasing his hold on the girl, when the latter shot away like the wind, and Tom also started and ran like a deer as he saw a policeman hastening down the street.

The adventure occurred near our hero's lodgings, and he darted into the hotel and hastened upstairs to his room.

That night the boy had strange dreams, and in all his dreams the face of the little street wanderer appeared to him.

In the morning he appeared at the office and discovered that some

In the morning he appeared at the office and discovered that some one had been in there overnight. He said nothing, but put things in order and awaited the arrival

of his employe

In due time Mr. Dugan appeared at the office, and Tom kept his own counsel

He said nothing about his suspicion that some one had been in the office after his departure the previous night.

Mr. Dugan had little to say, and at the usual time went over to

The day passed without unusual incident, and at the same hour as upon the previous day, Tom closed the office and proceeded to his lodgings; but before going he set a little trap.

He had caught many a rabbit in his time, and knew well how to set traps; but the trap he set in the office was not a rabbit-trap, but a little device of another description entirely.

Tom met Mr. Brinsmaid, and reported that he had not tumbled to anything up to that time.

Mr. Brinsmaid and reported that he had not taken to anything up to that time.

Mr. Brinsmaid gave Tom a certain address, and told him to communicate with him, and Tom returned to meet his friend Carlyle, "Well, Tom, what have you to report?"

"I saw Brinsmaid."

"Had you any news for him?"
"No; but I've a little item for you."
"Let's hear it."

Tom told of the fact that some one had been in Dugan's office

Tom told of the fact that

"How do you know, my lad?"

Tom related several little facts which led him to the conclusion, and the detective opened his eyes wide, and exclaimed:

"Well, this gets me! Why, boy, you're a born detective!"

"I've eyes about me, sir."

"I should say you had. And now, Tom, look sharp, and learn if this occurs again."

"I've set a trap, sir."

"You have?"

"You have?"

"Yes, sir."
"Well, you are a wonder indeed. So you've set a trap?"

" Yes, sir.

" For what purpose?"

To discover in the morning whether or not any one enters the office to-night.

And suppose you learn some one has been there?'

I'll let you know."
Who else will you inform?"

" No one else

Not even Mr. Dugan?"

Well, my lad, I believe you would run along all right without idance. You do not appear to need instructions. You're right; guidance.

you must not inform any one but me."

"All right, sir. And now, how about Fred and his pals?"

"I've got 'em all. Got 'em dead to rights. They'll all go up."

"Will I be required as a witness?"

" Not much. Tom started for his lodgings. All the time his mind was running

Tom started for his lodgings. All the time his mind was running on the fair little face he had seen the evening before.

He had not mentioned his adventure to his friend Carlyle, and he was in hopes of meeting the girl once more.

He reached his lodgings, however, without having met the girl, and returned to his bed with the remark:

"Hang it! I wish I had not shook her off so roughly! I begin to think that it was a real case of suffering—no swindle!"

Upon the following morning Tom rose and proceeded to the office, and examined his trap. Some one had been there overnight.

"Well," muttered the youth, "the next thing is to find out who comes here like a ghost."

#### CHAPTER XII.

Mr. Dugan appeared the third morning at his usual time, and, as on previous days, at eleven o'clock went over to the court. Upon the day in question Tom was at his desk writing, when there came a knock at the door.

"Come in," said Tom.
The door opened and a role tooch.

The door opened and a pale-faced young man entered the office, and as Tom's eyes fell upon the visitor he gave a start, and a chill went through his heart.

The visitor gazed around in a furtive manner, and in a low voice

" Is Mr. Dugan here?"

"No, sir."
"Where is he?"

"Over at court."

The young man remained silent a moment, and then asked:

Do you expect Mr. Dugan in soon? "About one o'clock."

The young man started to go away, when Tom asked. "Will you leave your name?"
"No; I will call again."

"Mr. Dugan always prefers that gentlemen should leave their names.''
"I will call again.'

"When?

"To-morrow."

"To-morrow."

The young man passed from the room, and Tom ejaculated:
"Well, I'll be hanged! What does all this mean?"

The incident that had caused Tom to start when he first beheld the young man was the fact that the young man's face was almost an exact counterpart of the pale face that had looked into Tom's the night when he had shaken the beggar girl from his arm.

"Hang it!" he said, "it must be her brother, and he was dressed like a gentleman, and she was a miserable beggar! I'll find that girl," added Tom, after a moment. "This is a little mystery of my own that I am bound to work up."

Meantime, Tom had watched Mr. Dugan closely. He had concluded the man was a skinner, and yet he had not seen anything to justify the suspicion. The fellow Brinsmaid had pronounced Dugan a rascal, and from that moment Tom had been led to think that there was a possibility that his employer was an honest man.

At one o'clock Mr. Dugan entered the office.

"Has any one been here, Tom?"

"Yes, sir, a young man."

"Did he leave his name?"

"No, sir."

"No, sir."
"I told you always to get the names of visitors."
"I asked him his name."
"And he refused to give it?"

"Yes, sir.
"Describe his appearance."

Tom described the appearance of the visitor, and Mr. Dugan ejaculated, in an under-tone:

Drayton

"Aha! I thought so," mentally exclaimed Tom; but his lips were mute.

"Was he well dressed, Tom?"
"Yes, sir; dressed like a gentleman."
"And he said he would come again?"
"Yes, is"

"When?"

" To-morrow," "If he does come to-morrow, Tom, you ask him to wait, and you come over to court and call me."

I will, sir.'

During the rest of the day Tom kept up considerable of a thinking. He had made up his mind to learn who the party could be who entered the office every night.

Tom whited until Mr. Dugan departed for the night, when he began rummaging around, and at length arranged quite a neat hiding-place behind an old rack of books.

The book-case was set against the wall, shutting in a recess where, upon some former occasion, a door had been, and the recess formed a most excellent place for Tom to secretly ensconce himself.

"I'll solve this mystery," he said, "or go to jail!"

The lad went out and got his lunch, then he went and bought a policeman's baton, and returned to the office with the remark:

"I'll see this through, and with this stick, if need comes, I can

raise Old Harry!

It was six o'clock when Tom entered the office, and before doing so he had watched to see that his movements were not observed The lad felt that something was going to happen, and after he had stowed himself away in his hiding-place, he muttered:
"Well, there's something in the air. I feel it!"
Tom had arranged so he could see what was going on in the

He had been fully three hours in his hiding-place when he heard the office door open, a candle was lighted, and the intruder advanced toward the little off-room, a view of which Tom commanded from his hiding-place.

"Well, I'll be shot!" he muttered, as he recognized in the intruder Mr. Dugan. "By George!" he said to himself, "I've made a fool of myself! I might have known! Here I am cooped up, for old Satan knows how long, and all for nothing!"

Alas! Tom did not know it was fate after all that led him to hide behind the book-rack.

Mr. Dugan sat down at his desk, and began talking aloud.

Mr. Dugan sat down at his desk, and began talking aloud.

He said:

"Well, well, I am decided upon my course! Satan, get behind me! The temptation is great, my need is greater, but I'll not be a rogue! I have become almost a rogue already; my necessities have driven me to do things from which my soul recoiled, and I know I am looked upon as a professional shyster. Possibly I am, but I'm not a rogue at heart. I'm not an assassin, and I will not be tempted, and if I could only find the girl, justice should be done. To think that I ever seriously listened to the suggestion of that coward Brinsmaid! Well, well! I'll tel him know that he can be used for I'll teach him that there is one lawyer who will not sell his soul for

Tom overheard every word of the lawyer's soliloquy, and he was elighted. The lad was glad to learn that his employer was, after delighted.

all, an honest man at heart.

The lawyer sat for a long time lost in thought, and finally arose

and went to a private drawer in his desk and drew forth a paper.

He read over the document, and then rising from his chair, stepped to the fire-place in the office. He studied the place awhile and then removed a brick, disclosing an aperture, and drew forth a bundle of papers.

"This," he muttered, "is hardly a safe place to keep these pre-

"This," he muttered, "is hardly a safe place to keep these precious papers; but I will soon have the copy completed, and then I will carry it away and place it where it will be safer."

"By George!" thought Tom, "I've struck, I've found out the secret! I know where the papers are, and I can make two hundred and fifty dollars! Yes, yes, I'm all hunky!"

The lawyer opened the roll of papers, and commenced reading one of the documents over, and as he read, he muttered:

"Ah, here is a fortune for the child; but where is she? I have held on to her estate in the midst of threats and temptations, and I will hold on to it until she is found alive, or proved to be dead; and then the other provisions of the will are in force."

Tom lay low, watching and listening.

The lad's opinion of Mr. Dugan had changed, and he was thinking over in his mind how he should act in the face of his wonderful discovery.

ful discovery

He was still thinking the matter over, when he heard a slight

He glanced in another direction, and a sight met his gaze that caused his heart to stand still and his hair to rise on end.

A second party had entered the room, and as Tom gazed, his glance fell upon one of the most villainous faces he had ever beheld during his whole life.

If ever he had seen the face of a murderer, he was gazing on one at that moment.

The intruder had sneaked into the room. Tom knew that Mr. Dugan was slightly deaf, and the latter fact must have been known to the satanic-faced fellow who, on tiptoe, was stealing toward the

The latter was busily engaged in reading a paper, seemingly a closely written legal document, and he was unaware of the near approach of the nocturnal intruder.

proach of the nocturnal intruder.

As Tom gazed, he made a second terrible discovery—the man carried a gleaming knife in his hand. His purpose was murder, beyond all question.

A moment passed—a moment of awful suspense. The man approached nearer and nearer to the lawyer, and Tom was too paralyzed for the moment to decide upon his course. It was the most terrible experience of his whole life; his own nearness to death when the thieves sought to drown him was as nothing compared to the horror of the moment. There erept onward a man with a dagger, his face aglow with fiendish purpose, and his intention a coldger, his face aglow with fiendish purpose, and his intention a cold-blooded murder.

The man crept forward, and at length stood directly over the lawyer, his knife was raised aloft, and Tom was helpless. The horror of the situation was too great for his nerves, and he stood paralyzed and appalled.

paralyzed and appalled.

Had the assassin at that moment struck the fatal blow, the lad would have been powerless to interfere.

He was wedged in behind the book-case. He held his club in his hand, and could plainly perceive all that passed.

In instant and the spell was broken Tom's powers returned to him. It was the murderer who broke the spell.

The man was standing over his intended victim with his knife

writted, but the gleaming weapon did not descend. The man speke; he said in a husky voice:

Move or speak, and you are a dead man!"
As it proved, Mr. Dugan was a man of nerve and courage, but physically he was no match for the powerful assassin; besides, he was as it proved later on, unarmed, and at a decided disadvantage was though he hed been even though he had been

The lawyer turned his head and looked up at his would-be assassin, and in a calm voice said:

"Why are you here? What do you seek?"

"The will or your life!"

"The tormer you can not have; the latter it is useless for you to

I must have the will or your life!"
It will not avail you to take my life!"
I know nothing about that. I have my orders."

From whom?"
No matter. I have my orders."

"And your orders are to murder me or get the will?"

My friend, the will is not here; I can not surrender it. just such a contingency as is now presented. Kill me, and the will can never be produced!"

'Kill you, and the will can never be produced?" repeated the

Mr. Dugan evidently discovered he had made a mistake and cre-

ated an absolute purpose for his murder, and he said:

You do not understand me. The will can never be produced by you, and my murder would prove a fruitless device. The document is in the hands of those who know what to do with it in case of my death? of my death.

moment the assassin appeared to be lost in thought; but at

length he said

I do not believe you.

Think as you choose. 'Will you surrender the document?'

will not.

"Listen: do so, or I will murder you, and carry all the papers to my employer "
"My death will not avail your employer."

I believe you lie."

"I can not argue that matter with you further."

"I believe you hold the document in your hands."

The lawyer was silent.

"Listen: I will pay you the money for the will, or I will kill you. Answer! Will you surrender the document?"

"I can not."

"You profer to discrete

"You prefer to die?"
"I have answered you."
"Consider well."

"I have considered; you have my answer."

"I am not here to intimidate you. We are alone in this building. I arranged for that. You are at my mercy. Surrender the will, or you die."

"I've answered you."

"And you invite your own death?"

The larger was oxidently preparing for a struggle with the second

The lawyer was evidently preparing for a struggle with the as-

sassin, and the latter said:
"No, no; that will not do. You are at my mercy. You can
not save yourself. Surrender or die."

The lawyer was silent.

The lawyer still remained silent.

Two!

The lawyer did not speak "Three!" pronounced the "Three!" pronounced the man, and the knife descended, but it did not reach the objective point. The weapon was knocked from the scoundrel's hand, and a second blow felled the assassin to the

The lawyer's life was saved, and Tom Cary stood with his club yer the would-be murderer! The latter attempted to move, and over the would-be murderer! the powerful lad dealt him a second blow, and he straightened out upon the floor stunned.

Mr. Dugan had risen to his feet and stood aghast; but regaining his voice, exclaimed:
"Tom, you here?"
"Yes; I am here!"

"Yes; I am here!"
"You have saved my life."
"I think the fellow intended to murder you, sir.
"How comes it you were here and prepared?"
"I will explain at another time, sir. What shall we do with that fellow? Will you take my club and hold him to the floor while I run and summon the police?"

A moment the lawyer thought, but finally said:
"Tom, I will not send for the police."
"You will not send for the police?"

"What shall we do? Kill him?"

Sir, I do not understand; the man intended to murder you."
Yes; he did intend to kill me."
And you will not hand him over to the police."

"There are reasons why I prefer to let him go."

"This is very strange, sir."

Yes. Tom: but listen: I see you are a friend: you are a brave, shrewd hoy. I will explain to you afterward; we will let him go."

The man moved again, and Tom raised his club.

"Hold, Tom! Do not strike!"

"But he will want his fact."

" But he will regain his feet."

" Let him. You have the club, I have the knite. We are a match for him. I wish to improve our advantage.

#### CHAPTER XIII.

THE man attempted to rise to his feet, when the lawyer commanded in a firm voice:

'You scoundrel! lie still!'

The man looked, but ceased to move.

"So you thought I was at your mercy? But you see I was prepared for you, as I will be every time for both you and your employer! Rise to a sitting position."

The man obeyed; the big-bodied coward was evidently completely complete.

ly cowed.
"You sought to kill me?"

"I only meant to scare you," said the man.
"It's false! I had a witness who listened to all you said, who saw you attempt to strike the fatal blow. Villain, now you are at my mercy!"

"Have mercy!" the man had the cheek to plead.

"We will see. I wish you to sign a paper."

"I can not sign any paper."

"You can not?"

No."

"All right, then you go to jail. Tom, sound the alarm for the

Hold!" called the man

"Abid!" called the man.
"Ah, I thought you would sign, or to prison you go for twenty ears! Mark you, I've no grudge against you."
"If I sign what will you do?"
"Let you go free."
"You promise?"
"I do."

"I do.

"I will sign."

The lawyer sat down at his desk, and drew up a document. He held paper and pen to the man, and said:

Now sign.

"I am to go free?"

"You will not make a charge against me?"

The man signed.

"Now, then, answer me a few questions."
"I will not answer any questions."
"You will not?"

"I know you, Mullane."
The man started.

"Your disguise does not conceal your identity; I knew you the moment you spoke to me. Listen: I have the paper; answer my

"You promised if I signed the paper you would let me go free."
"I did; but I did not say I would not hand the paper to the police. Answer my questions, or I will let you go free and then pass the paper to the police, and they will find you."
"What tracein do you desire a to energy?"

"What question do you desire me to answer? "Where is the child?"

"If I answer, what will you do?"
"Hold the paper."
"Hold it over me?"

"And when shall it be destroyed?"
"After your employer has done justice."
"You think he has the child?"

"You are mistaken. If he had the child he would not care about the will."
"Where is the child?"

"I do not know. He does not know."

"Are you telling me the truth?"

"I am. The child was stolen from him."

"When?"

"I do not know." "He can not find her?"

"Does he suspect who stole her?"

"Who?"

"The mother."
"The mother?" ejaculated the lawyer.

"I thought the mother was dead?"

"So did he; but he now believes she lives."

A moment the lawyer was thoughtful, then he said:

"Is this true what you are telling me?"

"It is the truth. And now I have put myself in your hands, I will ask a favor."

"Sneak."

"Speak."
"You will not reveal to my employer the fact that I have admitted this much to you?"

I will see

"Remember, I have spoken to save my life, or save myself from

going to jail."

"Why do you permit yourself to be this man's slave?"

"He holds a power over me greater than you do in the possession of that paper.

You do not love him?" " I hate him.

You would be free from him?"

" And if you were, you would aid the right?"

I would."

We shall see, Mullane; something may be done. I will hold your confidence, but he shall know that you signed the paper."

Yes, he can know that; I will tell him myself."

"Enough; you can go."
The man tose to his feet and slunk toward the door.
Tom stood ready in case the man attempted an assault; but he did not, and the door closed behind him.

"Tom, follow him, and see that he goes to the street."
Tom, club in hand, followed the man. He saw him descend to the street and walk off, and then the lad returned.

He has gone?'

"Yes, sir."
"And now, Tom, you must explain."
"Explain what, sir?"

"Your presence here to-night."
"I will, sir. I have been in your employ but a few days, but I am very observant, and I discovered that when I left the office some one appeared here during the time between my closing at night and opening in the morning. I feared it was a thief, and I determined to lay in wait to-night and watch."
"Why did you not report to me?"
"Simply because I could not prove that my suspicions were correct. I intended to prove them and then report to you."
"You did not suspect it was myself who came here?"
"How could I, sir? Why should you come here secretly, sir?"
"That is so. Tom, you are a bright lad; but why did you not reveal your presence here when you discovered it was me?"
"I was afraid to do so, sir."
"Why?"
"You might have thought that I had come here to steal."

"You might have thought that I had come here to steal."

"Well, your explanation appears all satisfactory, and one thing is certain: if you had not been here I should have been murdered."
"Yes, sir, that man intended to kill you."
"Now, Tom, what do you suspect?"
Tom remained silent.

"Come, you are a shrewd lad, a wonderfully shrewd lad. What

do you suspect? "I suspect, sir, that you are engaged in some will case; that the other parties have tried to buy you off; that they failed, and then sought to kill you."

"Lad, you are right; and now you must be silent as to what has occurred here."

"Certainly, sir; I know that."
"Tom, I will soon be able to double your pay; and, besides, I will some day make you m handsome present. Indeed, you have me bright future before you."

will some day make you a handsome present. Indeed, you have a bright future before you."

"Thank you, sir; and it is but fair to say that when I first came here I thought you were a bad man, and I did not intend to remain. I am now satisfied you are a good employer."

There followed a more extended conversation between Tom and his employer, during which the former said:

"That man who attempted to murder you, I suppose, was employed by Mr. Brinsmaid?"

Mr. Dugan gave a start, and inquired:

"What makes you think so?"

"I do not like Mr. Brinsmaid's face. He looks to me like an assassin."

"Yes, sir; when he came here he asked particularly where you were, and I did not like his manner. I made up my mind that he was a rogue."
"Mr. Brinsmaid did not send the man to murder me."

"Mr. Brinsmaid did not send the man to intrider me.

"You are sure, sir?"

"Yes; I am sure."

"All right," said Tom. "Mebbe I am mistaken in my estimate of Mr. Brinsmaid."

"We will talk that matter over later on, Tom. And now we will lock up the office."

"Shall I accompany you to your home, sir?"

"I am not going home. I shall remain here until morning."

"Shall I remain with you, sir?"

"No."

"You are not afraid to remain here?"

"Leave with me the knife and the club, and I will be all right.

And next time. Tom, consult with me before you attempt to carry
out any little scheme."

"If I had consulted with you this time, sir, you would have been

"If I had consulted with you this time, sir, you would have seen a dead man now."

"That may be so."

"Yes, sir; you would not have had any suspicion; you would have told me it was all right, that you knew who came here, and I would not have been present to save your life."

"That is all true, Tom, but in future I desire that you consult me."

"All right, sir."

Tom went forth, and was proceeding along the street, when he

Tom went forth, and was proceeding along the street, when he heard a groan. He looked about in every direction, but could not see whence the

A moment paused, and a second time he heard a low moaning sound.

He walked up and down the sidewalk, and glanced down an area-way, where, at the bottom of the steps, he espied what appeared to be a human figure all doubled in a heap.

Tom descended the steps and his suspicions proved true. A woman had fallen down the steps.

She was poorly dressed—evidently some poor, drunken vagrant—but that did not make any difference to Tom. He was a humane and and he leaned over the poor creature, and asked:

'Did you fall down here?'

" Yes."

Are you injured?" "I do not know how badly."

"Can I assist you to rise?

" If you please. Tom was amazed. The poor creature was not drunk; her voice was melodious, and her pronunciation that of a lady, and yet her apparel—as Tom could discern, even in the darkness under the starlight—was miserably poor. The lad assisted the woman to rise, and discovered that she had

He lad assisted the woman to lise, and discovered the late been wedged in between the lower step and a cellar-door.

He led her to the sidewalk, and was amazed to see that, poor and miserable as was her dress, she wore a veil.

"I do not think I am badly injured. I am much obliged," said

the woman.

' How did you chance to fall down there, madame?'

Tom had discovered that the woman was as sober as himself.

"I do not know, but it was because of my being veiled. I was very tired, and I attempted to lean against what I supposed was a rail fence, but it must have been the gate. It yielded, and I fell down the steps."

"Are you sure you are not hadly burt?"

"Are you sure you are not badly hurt?"
"I do not think I am hurt."
"Where do you live, madame?" "But a short distance from here."

"But a short distance from here."

"Let me accompany you to your house."

"No, no," answered the woman; and she shuddered.

Tom's curiosity was aroused, also his sympathy. A singular suspicion crossed his mind. He began to think there was something mysterious about the woman. He believed she had a history. It struck him as very remarkable that a woman so poorly dressed should talk with such a cultured accent and in such a rich voice.

Tom was determined to see her face and learn more of her history.

You had better let me accompany you to your home; you ap-

"You had better let me accompany you to your home; you appear very weak. Possibly you are hurt more than you suspect. You need not fear me."

The woman started to walk away, but she tottered and would have fallen. Tom ran to her side and caught her arm.

"See," he said, "you are very weak."

They had advanced under the light of a street lamp, and Tom could faintly discern a very pale face under the veil, and he imagined also that it was a handsome, delicate face.

"Oh, what shall I do?" murmured the poor woman.

"Madame, you can trust me. I am a Christian boy. I have a mother, and the dear presence of my mother is always with me. At this moment it bids me aid you."

The woman fixed her eyes from under her veil on Tom's face and after a moment's fixed glance she said:

"You have an honest face."

"I am an honest lad, madame."

"I am an honest lad, madame." "You appear brave and strong."

"I am brave and strong."
"And you have a mother?"
"Yes, I have a mother."

A widow?

"My father is dead. My mother is not now a widow."

"Where does your mother live?

"Far from here."
"Boy, I need help."
"I will help you. I have some money to spare. I am sorry for you."

"It is not money I need at this moment."

"What do you need most?"

"A friend."

"I will be your friend."

Tom had a clear view of her face, and an exclamation of amazement fell from his lips.

ment fell from his lips.

The face was pale and thin, but despite its attenuation it was the face and features of a beautiful woman.

"Madame, you are sick!"

"Yes, I am sick; and oh, how I have suffered and struggled!

Now it seems as though I were deserted by my God."

"No, madame, God has not deserted you. He has sent me to aid you. What can I do for you?"

Tears were streaming down the woman's face.

"Are you willing to aid me?"

"I am."

am

"What can you do?"

"What can you do?"
"Anything."
"No, no; it is too late!" the woman moaned, as she stood nervously ringing her hands.
"Will you not tell me your trouble?"
"Yes, I will tell you my trouble."
"Shall I accompany you to your home?"
"No. I can not return my poor home. I must succeed or go to the river. I can stand it no longer."
"Madame, tell me your story."
The woman's eyes brightened. She convulsively grasped the lad's arm, and said:
"I will!"

# CHAPTER XIV.

"You see," she said, "I am a lady."
"Yes, madame. I believe you are a lady, and I am surprised to behold you in this condition," answered Tom.
"This condition!" repeated the woman. "There is no disgrace in my position. I am poor; but I was once rich and surrounded with every luxury."

Tell me your story."

I will; but it is not of the past I will speak. I am poor now, and I have been the victim of great wrongs. I fear this night a greater wrong has been done me—yes, a greater wrong than any in the past. See yonder house?"

The woman pointed to a house on the opposite side of the street.

"Yes. I see that house."

"I believe my child is in that house."

"Your child in that house, madame? Why do you think so?"

"She has been abducted and taken there."

"She has been abducted?"

" By whom?"

"A vile woman."

A weird suspicion flashed through Tom's mind.
"Your child is a daughter?"

A young girl?" A mere child."

And you think she is in that house?"

"Why do you not go there and demand your child?"
"I did, and they thrust me from the house."
"Why do you not appeal to the police?"

"And did they afford you no satisfaction?"

"The sergeant sent an officer with me to the house."

"And you did not find your child?"

"I did not."

Pid the officer make a search?"

And did not find the child?"

"Then you must be mistaken."
"I am not mistaken. My child, I am convinced, was successfully hidden, and the woman succeeded in convincing the officer that I was a crazy woman.

"Did you return to the station-house?" "Id you return to the station-house?"

"I did, and the sergeant is of the opinion that I am crazy. Oh, young sir, to be poor and cultured invites more misery than the world dreams of. Yes, yes; they think me mad, and while they do, my child will be destroyed!"

"You think your child is there?"

You think your child is there?"

"Madame, will you describe your daughter to me?"
The woman described her child's appearance, and Tom exclaimed:

Can it be possible!"

"Can it be possible?"

"Can what be possible?"

"Madame, did your child ever go upon the streets to beg?"

"She did, unbeknown to me. I would rather have starved than she should have begged."

"I think I know your child."

In the description Tom thought he recognized the poor woman's child as the fair faced beggar-girl whom he had rescued from the ruffians a few nights previously as they were about forcing her into

"You think you know her?" Yes."

"Where did you see her?"
"A child answering her description asked me for help."

And were you the young man who rescued her from the ab-

'I did rescue a poor girl whom some men were seeking to force

into a carriage.

"That was my child! Oh, sir, you can, you will save her!"
"Well, you just bet I'll try," said Tom. "And now, madame, you are weak and sick; you must go to your home and leave this

whole matter to me. I can not go to my home until I know that my child is saved."

"I can not go to my home until I know that my child is saved."
"Is there any particular person whom you suspect as having had a hand in her abduction?"
"I will tell you. My child was on the street sweeping the sidewalks. A lady crossed the street and appeared to be attracted by the child's appearance. She questioned Margy, visited our home, and offered to assist us; but the moment I saw the woman's face I was a trief of her."

- was afraid of her."

  "Why were you afraid of her?"

  "Her face seemed very familiar to me, and yet I could not recall where I had seen her; but I felt a strange instinct of fear, and refused to accept assistance at her hands."

  "Did she ever visit your house agains"
  - "Did she ever visit your house again?"
    "No; but she haunted my child."
    "Did she speak again to your child?"
    "Yes, often."

"Yes, often."
"Before or since the attempt to abduct her?"

Before and since.

And you suspect she has abducted your child?"

" And she lives in that house?"

"What reason have you to suspect that she abducted your child

"What reason have you to suspect
to-night?"
"Margy was to have returned home at dusk. She has not returned. She would not voluntarily stay away from me."
"How did you learn where the woman lived?"
"Margy told me."
"How did Margy discover the fact?"
"By accident. She was passing the house one day, and saw the woman come forth. The child appeared to have a premonition of woman come forth. The child appeared to have a premonition of woman come said to me: evil, and she once said to me:

" 'Mother, if I am ever missing, look for me there." "
"She was to have been home at sundown?"

"She did not come?"
"No."

"How lately were you at your house?"

" Half an hour ago.

And you have received no tidings of her?"

"Of one fact you can rest assured: if she is in that house I will know it; but you must return home and leave all to me." I can not return home. "Listen. I must resort to stratagem to learn the truth. You will hinder me."

Can I trust you?" "I once saved your child."

" You did."

"I will devote my whole time to finding her."
"Why should you?"

"Because I have a mother."
"You have indeed an honest face."

"I can accomplish more than you dream."

"Can I not wait here?"

You must go to your home. Come; I will go with you."

"No. You must go to your none."

"Mine is a poor home."

"Never mind. I have a plan in my mind. You do not suspect all I know, nor can I tell you now; but, madame, I feel assured that this meeting with you is a most wonderful coincidence, and wonderful results will come of it. Yes, you must leave all to me."

"I will."

"Then come, we will go to your home."
The woman led the way around several squares, and on the way

Tom said:
"We may find that your daughter has returned.
Sha will never come.

"We may find that your daughter has returned.
"No, she hasn't returned. She will never come."
"Yes; I will bring her to you."
The woman turned into the hall-way of a miserable tenement-house, and led the way upstairs and entered the most miserable apartment Tom had ever seen in all his life.

As the farm-lad's eyes wandered around, a shudder passed over his frame. To him it seemed simply horrible that any human being could exist in such miserable quarters, and when he remembered that the woman was delicate and cultured and her daughter a mere

that the woman was delicate and cultured and her daughter a mere tender child, he wondered the more.

"This is your home?" he said.

"This is my home. Indeed it is a poor place."

"Madame, you must be very poor."

"Yes; and once I dwelt in a palace. I have descended from luxury and splendor to this squalid place."

"What crime could you have committed, madame, to call down such great punishment?"

The woman's eyes flashed, and she said:

"I committed no crime, but I have been sinned against."

"You must have had a bitter enemy."

"I have had a bitter enemy. No woman ever had a more bitter one."

"And your child shared the bitterness of this enmity?"

A strange light shone in the woman's eyes as she answered in a

A strange light shone in the woman's eyes as she answered in a

husky voice:

"It may be that I sinned as concerns my child, but I did not do it wittingly. I was not actuated by motives of revenge when I abducted my own daughter. No, no; I believed I was saving her; but I can not tell if harm has come to her now—it may be that I was wrong." wrong.

Tom was not anxious to press the woman to a full recital of her troubles at that moment; but he was determined at some future time to hear the whole story.

"You will remain here?" he said.

"Yes; and whether you succeed or not you will come to me?"

"I will."

"You must! For, as I live, if my child is not found to-night I will go to the mayor of this city! I will stand on the street-corner and tell my wrongs! I will visit from house to house and compel Tom feared the poor woman was really going mad, and said:

"You need have no fear, I will find your child."

"You appear confident?"

"You appear confident?"

"Yes, I am confident, and strange revelations are to pass between you and I, madame, later on. And now wait here for me. But wait! have you had food?"
"I do not need food."

you and 1, inautate, wait! have you had food?"

"I do not need food."

"Answer my question."

"Go find my child."

"No. Go find my child!"

"But you are weak from lack of food."

A certain suspicion had run through Tom's mind.

"Go!" she said.

The young man left the house, found a liquor sto

"Go!" she said.

The young man left the house, found a liquor store open, purchased a bottle of wine, and took some crackers from the public lunch-dish, and returned to the woman's quarters.

"You here! And you have failed?"

"No, madame, I do not mean to fail; but I have brought you some wine and crackers. Eat and be hopeful until you see me again."

Tom placed the wine and crackers on the floor—for there was no table in the room—and ran out.

table in the room-and ran out.

Strange thoughts were passing through the lad's mind, and he was recalling certain startling incidents and certain conversations he had overheard, and connecting them with the poor woman whom he had just left.

One fact Tom remembered—a strange, thrilling, startling fact.

A young man named Drayton had visited the office, and a certain singular coincidence had forced itself upon the lad's attention—there was a singular resemblance between the face of the youth Drayton and the missing girl whom he had started out to find and

The young man was walking along lost in deep thought, when suddenly he felt himself pushed off the sidewalk. His blood was up, and he made at the miserable-looking specimen of humanity who had shoved him off, when he was greeted with the familiar

salutation:

"Hold on, Tom, my lad!"

"Is that you, Carlyle?"

"Yes, boy. And now what are you doing here?"

Tom was a quick thinker, and, for reasons of his own, he determined not to tell the whole truth. He did not mean to tell a lie, but he did not intend to tell just what he was up to at that moment.

"I've been to the office."

I've been to the office. "Did you discover anything?"

"What?"

"Mr. Dugan is the ghost."
"Ah!"
"Mr. Dugan is in the habit of going to his office at night."

And did he discover you there?

Yes, sir.

Yes, sir.

"And what explanation did you make?"

"I told him the truth."

"That was right. And what did he say?"

"He said that I was all right, but that I ought to have informed and consulted with him."

"That was right also."

"What more did he say?"

"He sent me home."

"Will he discharge you?"

"Will he discharge you?"

"No. He will raise my salary."
Good again."

"Have you any reason to think, sir, that Mr. Dugan is a rogue?"
"Why do you ask?"
"Because I believe him to be an honest man."
"You do?"

Yes.

"What has led you to the belief?"
"I was concealed in his office. He did not know I was there, and I heard him commune with himself."

What did he say?"
I'll tell you. I think he is engaged in a will case."
Well?" ejaculated the detective.

I think some one has been trying to bribe him."

Well?

"He will not accept the bribe. He means to be honest."
"Possibly you are right, my boy. But what more did you

"There appears to be a missing child."
"Did he speak of a child?"
"He said:

"'If the child can only be found, justice shall be done, come hat may. I will die before this wrong shall go on!'"
"You overheard all that?"
"Yes, sir." what may.

The detective was thoughtful a moment, but at length he said: "This is very important, Tom."
"Yes, sir."

"Did he mention any names?"

" No.

"And he knew afterward that you must have overheard what he said?"

"Yes."
"And what did he say?"

"He said I must not repeat what I had overheard."

"And what did you say?"
"I made an evasive answer."
"Why?"

Because I knew I had promised to repeat to you all that oc-

curred."
"You are indeed a smart boy. But answer me: how comes it you are here? This is not in the direction of your home."
"I found a poor woman who had fallen down an area-way, and

"And you are going home?"
"Yes, I expect to, sir."

Tom again delivered an evasive answer. He did not wish the detective to know what he was up to, as he feared Carlyle might oppose his little scheme, and the lad was set to carry it through.

The two separated, and Tom proceeded to the house the woman had pointed out to him.

had pointed out to him.

#### CHAPTER XV.

CHAPTER XV.

Tom was a bold lad, and only considered the end he had in view, and did not realize the real risk he ran; did not know that he was contemplating a seeming offense against the law—one of the most serious offenses on the statute-book.

He passed through the alley-way of an adjoining house, scaled several fences, and made his way to the rear-yard of the house where the child was supposed to be a prisoner.

The lad prowled around examining the rear of the house, and watched the windows, little dreaming that if he were discovered he would be handled over to the police as a burglar.

He had been some minutes in the yard when he heard a scream, and the voice was that of a female in distress.

The lad's heart stood still. The conviction forced itself upon his mind that the mother's suspicions were right. The lad discerned that the cry was that of a young girl about Margy's age, and it was a scream of dire distress.

The boy listened for a repetition of the cry, but it came not. Instead, he thought he heard loud and angry voices, and afterward persuading and soothing tones; and he discerned, also, that the voices appeared to come from the rear room on the third floor of the house.

He stood and listened awhile, and at length all became still and

all the lights in the house were extinguished

"I am going to see who is in that room up on the third floor at all hazards," muttered Tom.

The lad was a natural climber. He could scale the highest trees; indeed, as far as climbing was concerned, he was a regular sailor.

There was a rear piazza to the house, the 100f of which was nearly on a level with the 1ear second-story windows, and Tom set to

climb to the roof of the portico.

climb to the roof of the portico.

Again he did not stop to consider his danger—indeed his perils were many. Besides the danger of an arrest he ran the risk of being shot at sight, as a common house-breaker, by any one who might discover his presence there on the roof.

The lad succeeded in reaching the roof, and for a moment he lay low and listened, and to himself muttered:

"So far, so good! And now how am I to reach the next story?"
He stood for some moments calculating his chances, and essayed to ascend by the leader, but the latter was too insecure, and he was too smart to risk his life unnecessarily.

After spending a few moments in close observation, he tried the blinds of one of the rooms. It chanced to be the general toiletroom. The blinds were easily opened, and, fortunately for the young explorer, the sash had not been fastened, and he raised the window. window

"Ah, here we are!" he muttered, and he slowly and cautiously raised the window and stepped into the room.
"So far, so good!" he again muttered, and he stood and listened. He was, indeed, on dangerous ground. Although the lights were all extinguished, he was not sure that every one in the house had retired.

retired.

He tried the door. It yielded, and he sterped into the hall, and with extreme coolness he removed his shoes. Carrying them with him, he moved along toward the stairs leading to the third floor. He reached the latter, and was passing through the third hall when he heard voices and came to a halt. A moment he listened, and discovered that the voices came from the floor below.

"Hang it!" he said, "I'd like to know what they are talking about. It may be they are talking about the girl. I will take the chances, go down and listen!"

The lad, with a coolness and nerve that were wonderful, descended to the second floor, and stepped close to the door leading into the

ed to the second floor and stepped close to the door leading into the front room. He peeped through the key-hole and discovered that there was a light dimly burning in the room, and a man and a woman there

He heard the woman say:

"You need not fear, it is all right. There will not be much of a time made about this disappearance."

"Aha!" thought Tom, "I am in the right house. And now I may learn what these fiends are up to, and I'll beat their game or die in the attempt.

The man said "There will be another search of this house."
"It will come too late."
"How so?"

"I will take the girl away at daylight."

Where will you take her? To Philadelphia."

"To Philadelphia."
"Will you communicate with Sanderson?"
"Communicate with Sanderson!" ejaculated the woman. "No, no; I will not! I've other purposes."
"How about Brinsmaid?"
"Well, I've beat him, after all."
"How did you chance to discover the girl?"
"She was sweeping the streets. I recognized her resemblance to her delicate-faced father; but I was not sure it was she until I accommanied her to her, home, and the moment my eyes fell upon the mother I knew all was right."

"You recognized the mother?"

"Yes, at a glance."

"Did she not recognize you?"
"No; but I think she had an impression that she had seen me somewhere, but she did not place me."
"You are in luck.

I could get ten thousand for the girl to-morrow."

The girl comes into possession of property worth little less than a million.

If she dies, who gets the property?" " Drayton.

"Senior or junior?"
"The boy."
"Where is Drayton?"

"He is missing."

"What has become of him?"

"No one knows."

"And the boy?"

Well, he is hiding like a fugitive."
From whom?"

Brinsmaid

"And the finding of the girl cuts them all off?"

Yes, if the will is ever found."

Who has the will?"

No one knows; but it is suspected that the lawyer has it."

Do you know the name of the lawyer?"

No. I wish I did."

Why?"

Leould make his terms."

"I've got the girl. I could make big terms."
"And you will take the girl to Philadelphia?"

" To-morrow."

"You may be discovered."
"No, no; I will drug her and carry her off."
You may be watched."

"I have arranged against all that, sir."

"I have arranged against all that, sir.

"And when you get her to Philadelphia?"

"I have my plans."

"What are your plans, Hannah?"

"My plans will give me control of all the property. It will all

be mine."

"I am on hand just in time,' was Tom's muttered comment, as he listened to the foregoing conversation.

The lad began to perceive that in a most singular and remarkable manner he had become an important factor in a great life-drama. He could see that the little beggar-girl, so fair and delicate, was the one life around which clustered great property possibilities.

"You will secure all the property?" said the man.

"Yes."

"Well, I've a plan."

"What is your plan?"

"I will reveal it to you in good time but I must first get the girl away."

away."
"But you will be traced."
"By whom?"

"The mother."

"She: Why, the poor, miserable creature is almost dead now.
She has not energy enough left to drive a mouse from her feet."

"She had energy enough to go to the police and have this house

Yes; that amazed me! I do not understand how she knew

enough to come here."

"That woman, weak as she is, will make a great time."

"Bah! She has no money, and she will be looked upon as a crazy woman."

"There is one contingency you overlook."

"What is it?"

"The woman will give publicity to the case."

"No one will believe her story; she is too miserable. Indeed, the shock may kill her."
"You can not tall. But there are those who will believe her."

You can not tell. But there are those who will believe her story." Who?"

"Who?"

"Sanderson and Brinsmaid and the lawyer who has the will."

Tom was peeping through the key-hole. He could see the woman's face, and he observed that she turned pale.

"I did not think of that," she murmured, in a low tone.

"No. You women do not think. If you want to get away with this thing you must silence the mother."

"You are right What shall I do?"

"I've nothing to suggest; but remember that the other parties will advance all the money, and they will, under the mother's directions, identify you, and they will trace you up."

The woman appeared thoughtful.

"Something must be done," said the man.

"Yes; and I know what I will do, and you must aid me. Let us settle the mother, and all will be right."

"Can I aid you?"

"You can."

"How?"

"I will tell you. To-morrow morning at daylight we will send

"How?"

"I will tell you. To-morrow morning at daylight we will send a message to the mother that the child is found. You will pretend to be a policeman, and go and offer to take the mother in a carriage to the station to identify her daughter. Once in the carriage, you can gag her and drive to L—. We will put the woman under the charge of the doctor, and all will be safe."

"You are a wonderful woman. Your brain is fertile. I never would have thought of that scheme."

"It is a good one."

"Yes."

"It can be carried out."

"Yes. And how much am I to receive?"
"One hundred dollars."
"While I am taking the mother to L—, you will go to Phila-

You can manage your part?"

" Easy enough.

"Then go now and make your arrangements to start in at daylight. Send a message to the mother, and follow with a carriage."

The woman gave the man minute directions as to the mother's address, and Tom made up his mind it was time to get out of the way if he did not wish to be discovered.

# CHAPTER XVI.

Tow had indeed done well. He had secured all the points in a wleked conspiracy, and he determined to balk the game. His first move would be to remove the girl, whom he was satisfied was a prisoner in the room above. He would then take mother and daughter to a place of safety, and he had not much time to

He was a brave and determined lad, and as a last resource could at least give away all the information he had obtained.

Tom stole away from the door and moved up the stairs, and he was not a moment too soon, as the door opened in the lower hall and the man came forth, and he heard the woman say:

"If you succeed you shall receive two hundred dollars."

"I will succeed, never fear."

"Well, well! thought Tom. "Now I must act."

He heard the man descend the stairs and pass out into the street.

He heard the man descend the stairs and pass out into the street, and the woman return to her room.

The lad went to the door and listened. Not a sound came from the room where he believed the girl to be. He tried the door. It was locked. He stood for a moment and considered what he should do.

An idea struck him. He went to the front room. It was unoccupied and the door was open. He took the key and tried it carefully in the lock of the rear room, but it would not work.

"I am not beat yet," he muttered, and he went to the front room and for a moment considered the situation. He struck match

and looked around.

There was a passage-way between the two rooms, and the key of one of the doors was in the lock.
"Aha!" he muttered. "Here I have it!"

He withdrew the key and tried it in the door that opened directly into the other room, Eureka! It was all right! The door opened and he was in the room.

A moment he stood and listened. Not a sound broke the still-ness. He was able to discern that there was a bed in the room. He approached the bed and again listened, and still not a sound broke the stillness.

"She must be there," he muttered, "and I only wish I had a dark-lantern. I dare not strike a light. She may scream."

He approached closer to the bed, stood over it and cautiously put forth his hand, and it rested upon the outlines of a human

The lad was in a perilous position. If it were not the girl, he was lost. The party, whoever it might be, would give the alarm and he would surely be caught.

"Who is here?" he whispered.

There came no answer.

"Hang it!" said he. "What can the matter be?"

He bent over the sleeper. There was some one there, but he could not hear any breathing, and a cold chill crept over his frame as the suspicion flashed through his mind that possibly the poor girl had died of terror.

He stood a moment considering what he should do, and at length

He stood a moment considering what he should do, and at length determined to risk the lighting of a match.

It was a risky undertaking; but time was passing. He lighted the match, glanced at the bed, and the mystery was fully explained. During the brief moment that the match burned a terrible sight met Tom's gaze—indeed, the mystery was explained. There was no danger of an outcry from the occupant of the bed.

The light went out and Tom was once more in darkness; but he determined to brave all chances. He saw that there was a gasbracket in the room. He lighted the gas and let it burn very low, but enough light was shed dimly throughout the room for him to

There the girl lay upon the bed silent and helpless, her eyes burning with agony, gazing toward the wall and set with terror.

Poor Margy! She had been bound and gagged.

Tom went close to her and whispered:

"If you hear, close your eyes."
The girl closed her eyes.
"If you recognize me, close your eyes," he said.
The girl closed her eyes.
"You understand all that I say?"

The eyes closed.
"I am your friend."
Again the eyes closed.
"I am come here to y

"I am come here to rescue you." Again the eyes closed.

"When I release you it is understood that you remain silent?"

The eyes closed again.
"You will make no noise?"

"You will make no noise?"
The signal came.
"Will you obey all my directions?"
Again the eyes closed.
"Remember!" warned Tom.
The eyes closed several times rapidly.
Tom saw that the lovely girl fully comprehended the situation.
He had a knife in his pocket, and in a few seconds he freed the girl. A moment she lay still, and did not move.
Tom rubbed her wrists. He saw that she was numb, and after a moment he said:

moment he said:

"I will go into the other room. Rise on tiptoe, put on your clothes, and come to me in the next room."

Tom stole from the room. A few moments passed, and like a ghost, so pale was she, the girl came toward him

Tom took her hand, and said:
"It's all right now. I will get you out of this house in a jiffy."
The lad was delighted at the success that had attended his ventures, and he would have defended the girl at that moment with his

He took her hand and led her down the stairs. He took her hand and led her down the stairs. They passed the room where the man and woman had held the conversation that Tom had overheard, and they descended to the lower hall.

"Stand here," said Tom. And he left the girl at the foot of the stairs while he went to the front door.

The door was closed on a night-latch only, and the lad opened it. He returned and clasped the girl's hand.

open door and down the stoop. Once on the street, he said:
"It's all right. You are safe."

"It's all right. You are safe."

The peor girl had not spoken beyond a word or two up to that time; but when the lad announced her safety she said:

"How did you know where I was?"

"Your mother told me."

The must be almost crazy at my ab-

"Oh, my poor mother! She must be almost crazy at my ab-

"She is greatly alarmed."
"Tell me: how is it my mother got you to save me?"
Tom proceeded and told the circumstances attending his meeting with the girl's mother, and when he had concluded, Margy said:
"Oh, why is it they pursue me?"
"What do you think?"

"I know that my mother and I are very poor and wretched.
But why we are pursued and wanted I can not tell."
"Who took you to that house?"

" A man. Under what circumstances?"

"My mother and I were starving. I met a man on the street and asked him for help. He appeared to be very kind and good and said, 'Poor child! Of course I will help you. Come with me to my house, and my wife will give you many things that you need."

"Yes. I got the gag out of my mouth and screamed?"
"I heard you."
"Ah! Then my one scream brought me help after all?"
"It served as a guide; but I had already determined to search the house for you." And he took you to that house, and you screamed?"

As they passed along, Tom was struck with the girl's rare beauty. She was about fourteen, but looked older. The youth, however, felt no feeling toward her other than a sentiment of sympathy, as his heart was up in the country in possession of the girl whom he had rescued from drowning.

"Your mother will be glad to see you?"

"Yes. Oh, how terrible is all this! I do not know what we shall do."

shall do." I will talk the matter over with your mother. You have a

friend now

Oh, thank you! But you can not be with us always."

"Well, we shall see.

The two reached the house where Margy dwelt. They ascended the stairs, and moment later mother and daughter were clasped in each other's arms; and then the mother poured forth her thanks to Tom, and asked:
"Where did you find her?"
Tom and the girl told their story.
"Oh, what shall we do?" murmured the mother.

Tom led the latter aside, and said:
"Madame, you must leave these quarters."
"Why?" " Why?

"Your enemies know of your present residence."

"That is true.

"An attempt will be made to gain possession of your daughter."

"How do you know?"
"I have learned that there are persons who will take any chances

to secure possession of Margy."

"Who are you?"

"My name is Tom Cary."

"What do you know of me and my child?"

"Much. But we will talk of that at another time. You must leave here and at once." leave here and at once.

The woman fixed a strange look on Tom, and said: "I am in your hands."

Tom was but an inexperienced boy, but he was a shrewd, determined fellow, and possessed a great many points of prominent individuality. He knew something must be done, and he had a few dollars.

He glanced around the room, and there was a smile of grim

humor in his look and tone as he said:
"It won't take long to pack up."
The woman answered:

"There was a time when that remark could not have been made. Oh, if you only knew how I have been wronged, and how that poor girl has been wronged! Had we our own we would at this moment inhabit a palace."

Margy had never heard her mother speak thus before. The good

Margy had never heard her mother speak thus before. The good woman rarely made any allusion to the past.

"I ought to know," answered Tom, promptly.
"Ought to know what?" demanded the woman.
"Your whole history."

"No. The time has not come to speak."
"No," said Tom, "it will not come, I suppose, until you and your daughter are both shoved in a pauper's grave."
Again the woman fixed a strange look upon the boy.
"What do you mean?" she said.
"I mean that I believe if you were to speak now, your wrongs might be righted."
"What can you do?"
"I've done something, haven't I?"

"What can you do?"
"I've done something, haven't I?"
"Yes, indeed, you have."
"And I can tell you something: if it were not for me your story would come too late. Anyhow, had Margy remained in that house until daylight, you would never have seen her again."
"What do you mean?"
"Just what I say."
"Explain."
"Explain."
"I overheard the woman talk."

What woman?'

"The woman who had the girl abducted."

" What did she say?

"I will not tell you. But she concerns you and your daughter." Then the woman knows us?" But she had a devilish scheme on hand as

Yes.

"In spite of our poverty and disguise, our enemies have found us out?"

"Yes."
"Let us fly."

"Yes, come, and we will leave the key here. I will come later

on and take care of your few duds."

It was just before daylight as the trio issued upon the street.

Tom led the way. The lad was thinking as to where he should take his charges

take his charges.

He walked toward the Grand Street Ferry.

"Where are you going?"

"To Brooklyn. I am not acquainted there. I have never been there in my life. But you must leave New York—you must hide."

"I have a friend in Brooklyn, but she is too poor to aid us."

"She could harbor you if she were paid?"

"We will go direct to your friend."

"But we have no money.
"I have."

But you can not spend your money for us."

Yes, I can.

"Why is it you take such an interest in us?"
"Because I have a mother, because I am sorry for you, because

mean to see you through."
"Some day your reward will come."
"Oh, hang the reward! All I want is to see you safe and

The party took the cross-town car and reached the Grand Street Ferry, and when the river was crossed, Margy's mother led the way to a humble little one-and-a-half story house, where a woman lived whose occupation was announced by a sign on the front of the house:

# "Washing Taken in Here."

The lonely owner of the house was a thrifty, good natured Irish woman, and she was up and about when the party arrived, and upon seeing and recognizing them, she exclaimed in a hearty man-

oner:

"Well, Mrs. Drayton! Is it yerself? Well, I'm glad to see you!"

The good woman—Mrs. McGrath—had known the Draytons before they had become so miserably poor, and the address of welling a revelation to Tom. come came like a revelation to Tom

It was the first time he had heard the woman's name

Tom advanced after the greetings had passed, and holding a twenty-dollar bill in his hand toward Mrs. McGrath, he said:

"My good madame, can you take this and make Mrs. Drayton and her daughter comfortable for a few days?"

"Indeed I can for a few days without a cent."

"Oh, no, you shall be well paid."

Mrs. Drayton gazed aghast.

Tom called the latter aside, and said:

"Your name is Drayton?"

"Yes: but I am only known as Mrs. Drayton by this good worm.

"Your name is Drayton?"

"Yes; but I am only known as Mrs. Drayton by this good woman. She was my friend when I first came to New York, and before I found it necessary to conceal my identity."

"All right. So far so good. It is lucky you had this friend. She is an honest woman?"

"Yes, she is an honest woman."

"That is all right. And now listen to me: neither you nor your daughter must go to New York until you see me again."

"You have my promise. But when shall we see you again?"

"To-night."

"We are under great obligations to you."

"To night."

"We are under great obligations to you."

"Do not mention it, if you please."

Tom went away. The lad was pretty well tired out. He had been on the go all night; but he reached his lodgings at six o'clock, and determined to take a little sleep before going to the office. He retired to his bed and fell asleep, and when he awoke and looked at his watch he uttered an exclamation of amazement. It was eleven o'clock. He had slept 'way over his time.

In the meantime, the woman who had held the talk in the front

at his watch he uttered an extensive time.

In the meantime, the woman who had held the talk in the front room of the house from which Tom had rescued Margy, had slept on till daylight, when she ascended to the room where she had left the girl securely bound and gagged.

The girl was missing! The bed was empty! The gag and the

The girl was missing! The bed was empty! The gag and the ropes lay upon the floor!

The woman gazed in astonishment.

"What does this mean?" she muttered, and she commenced an examination of the room; but, alas! she discovered no clew to aid in solving the meature. in solving the mystery—and the mystery was never solved as far as she was concerned

She was still in the room when she heard her name called from elow. She passed to the hall and beheld the man with whom she below. She passed to the hall and beheld the may had held the conversation the night before.
"You here?" she exclaimed.
"Yes, I am here; but the other party is gone."
"How did you know?"
"I just came from there."

The woman stared. "What do you mean?"

"I mean you had better go very slow. Your scheme has been blown."
"Please explain."
"Well, the woman has gone. She has skipped."

"And so has the girl."
"Eh"
"The girl is gone."
"She is, ch? Well, m Well, madame, the jig's up, that's all. We had better go.

#### CHAPTER XVII.

Tow hurried down to the office expecting to receive a severe reprimand for not being on hand, but to his surprise the office door

He met the gentleman occupying the office on the lower floor and

he ascended the stairs.
"Will you tell Mr. Dugan I wish to see him?" said the gentle-

"I will, sir," said Tom.

The lad ascended to the top floor where Mr. Dugan's offices were located, and, as stated, found the door locked.

"Well, this is strange," he muttered, and opened the door, when a sight met his gaze which caused him to utter a scream, and the gentleman from the lower office, who had followed Tom upstairs, entered the room.

Mr. Dugan lay upon the floor in a pool of blood, stone dead.

The gentleman came to Tom and said:

"What does this mean?"

"I do not know, sir. He has been murdered."

Tom had recovered his composure, and in doing so proved what a wonderful nerve he possessed.

"I will call the police," said Tom, and he moved to go to the door; but the gentleman called him back, and said:

"You must not leave here. I will send for the police."

The gentleman called one of his clerks, and sent him to the station-house, and in a few moments the captain of the precinct, accompanied by a patrolman and a detective, entered the office.

Meantime, the news of the murder had spread, and the usual crowd gathered.

The detective asked Tom a number of questions.

The detective asked Tom a number of questions.

The lad wished to conceal certain facts, and became a little confused and contradictory, and the result was the detective put him under arrest

under arrest.

Tom was taken to the station-house and cross-examined, but he refused to say anything. And while the examination was proceeding, Carlyle entered the station.

"Hallo, Carlyle! You here?"

"Yes; and I desire to be left alone with this lad."

"Do you know him?"

"He is in my employ."

"In your employ?"

"Yes."

"Why, we think he is the assassin!"
Do you?"

Well, you're wrong. Will you leave him with me captain?" " Yes.

Carlyle and Tom were left alone.

"Tom, tell me about this.
Tom told the whole story.
"Abl you should have to

"Ah! you should have told me last night, my boy. I fear you are in a bad scrape."
"You believe my story, sit?"

"You believe my story, sit?"
"Certainly I do."
Tom said nothing about Mrs. Drayton and her daughter, nor did he tell about the secret drawer.
He merely related the conversation.
"Mullane must have returned and murdered Mr. Dugan."
No, Mullane did not murder him," said the detective. "And, Tom, you would be all right but for one fact."
"What is that, sir?"
"He was beaten to death with a club."
"How is that bad?"
"The club helonged to you."

"The club belonged to you."

"That is so.

"The man who sold you the club may identify you."
"I didn't buy it of a man."
"Who did you buy it from?"

"A boy."

"Well, it may rise in judgment against you; but I'll fix it."

The detective went to the district attorney's office, and later on Tom was taken before a judge and gave bonds to appear as a wit-

The papers appeared with glowing accounts of the murder, and Tom appeared as the only one against whom suspicion pointed, and yet, after cool reflection, it appeared improbable to any one that he could have had a hand in the murder, as it could not be shown that he could have a motive.

An examination revealed the fact that the dead man's desk had been rifled, and many papers carried off, and it was known that he

had many enemies

Carlyle had told Tom a story he was to repeat, and his statement

Carlyle had told Tom a story he was to repeat, and his statement appeared reasonable and very probable.

At any rate, the lad was released on bail, being held merely as a witness, and the detective set to work to find the assassin, and Carlyle had a clew to work upon which promised great results.

When Tom was released he found himself without employment, and matters looked rather blue.

Carlyle said to Tom just before separating from the lad:

"Tom, I must see you to night."

"Brinsmaid left you an address?"
"Yes, sir."

"You were to let him know it you had anything to communicate?"
"Yes, sir."

"All right. Send him word that you wish to see him, and conmunicate with me to-night.'

"I will, sir."

Later in the afternoon Tom went over to Williamsburg and proceeded to the house where he had placed Mrs. Drayton and her

Madame," said Tom, "I wish you to take a short walk with

Mrs. Drayton expressed her willingness, and the two started off

Mrs. Drayton expressed.

Together.

They had gone but a short distance, when Tom said:

"Madame, you must tell me your story."

"Tell me what you suspect?"

"Well, you have led me to suspect that you were once rich.

"I was; but what else do you suspect?"

A moment Tom was thoughtful, but at length he said:

"I suspect that, if you are perfectly frank with me, I can recover your fortune"

I do not understand."

"Certainly not. Things have come about in a strange manner. But tell me: do you know of a man named Dugan?"
"He was at the bottom of all my wrongs."
"This is strange."

"The man ruined me."
"Well, madame I repeat, this is strange."
"Do you know Mr. Dugan?"

"Yes,"
"Do not tell him you know me. Do not mention my name to him," said the woman, in fearful tone and excited manner.
"You need not fear, madame, I will not. Mr. Dugan is dead! He was murdered last night—murdered in cold blood!"
"Mr. Dugan dead!" exclaimed the woman.
"Yes, dead. He was murdered last night," said Tom.
"He has come to judgment at last," murmured Mrs. Drayton.
"You knew he was a bad man?"
"Yes."

"Well, madame, if he was, I can tell you one thing: he repented before he died, and had he lived he would have done you jus-

"How do you know?"

"I was his clerk The woman recoiled from Tom as though he had been a snake. "Have I been trapped at last!" she ejaculated.

"No, madame, you have not been trapped. There is a strange fate in all this.

"A strange fate?"
"Yes."

" How?"

"My meeting with Mr. Dugan and my meeting with you."
"How long have you known Mr. Dugan?"
"A week ago I had not seen him, nor had I seen you or your

"Under what circumstances did you meet Mr. Dugan?"
Tom related how he had entered Mr. Dugan's employ, and asked:
"Do you know a man named Sanderson?"
The woman turned pale, and exclaimed:
"Do you know him?"
"No; but I have heard his name mentioned."

"By whom?"

"The woman who stole your child."

"Ah! I see—I see!" murmured the woman:
"Do you know a man named Brinsmaid?" s asked Tom.

The woman began to tremble, and exclaimed: "I am betrayed at last!"

"No, madame, you are not betrayed—not by me. I am your friend.

"And you have named my bitterest enemies."
"I came upon their names through chance, and I wish to know about them.

"They are my enemies. You have named the three men who were the conspirators who ruined me."
"One more question: do you know a young man named Dray-

The woman's face became ghastly.
"Do you know him?" she asked.
"I have seen him."
"Where?"

"At the office of Mr. Dugan."
"What was he doing in that office?"
"He came to see Mr. Dugan. Is he an enemy?"
"No, he is not an enemy. I thought he was dead."
"Is he your son, madame?"

Who is he?"
I can not tell you now."
Will you not tell me your story?"
Not now."

Not now

Why not?"

"The time has not come for me to speak."
"When you do speak it may be too late."
"What do you know?"

"I know there is a will in existence."
"A will in existence!"

Made by whom? "That I can not tell."

"What can you tell?"

Nothing positively; but I believe your child is an heicess. I

believe her life stands in the way of others. I believe there are those who would murder your child in order that the property might revert to them.

The woman became terribly excited, and said

And what leads you to believe this?

"I will not tell you more until you tell me your story."
The woman was greatly excited, and she said:
"I dare not tell you my story."

Why not?

This may be a trap."
Madame, did I not rescue your daughter?"

- "I will tell you why I brought you here."
  Tom related the conversation—or a part of it—that had occurred between the abductors of Margy.

And they intended to abduct me?"

"You are indeed my friend!"

"Listen: I am poor; but could I not have forced them to take me into their scheme or buy my silence?"
"That is so."
"Instead I rescued your child and led you out of danger."
"That is so."

" And can you not trust me?" "I do not know what to do."
"There is a will in existence."

"You are sure?" I'm sure

"Who holds the will?"
"I fear it is now in the hands of your enemies. I believe Dugan held that will, and was murdered so that others might get possession

of it."

"This is all very strange. And you will not tell me how you obtained all this information?"

"I obtained it at different times, and much of it from overhearing Mr. Dugan talking to himself. I tell you, no matter how bitter an enemy he was at one time, when he died he was your friend, and meant to do you justice." and meant to do you justice.

How do you know I am the right party."
I know well."

"How do you know?"

" Never mind, madame. And now listen: I have proved myself Am I to have it?" worthy of your confidence. 'Yes, I will trust you.'

"Madame, let me tell you one thing: I saw and talked with Mr. Dugan within an hour of his death."
"Who killed him?"
"That is to be discovered. But one thing is certain: they will need me to trace the murderer, and they will need me to trace the will."

This is all very strange."
Madame, I should say your whole history was very strange.''
You're right."

Will you tell me your story?"
I will."

Proceed." Not now." " When?"

- I must have time to think." "One word, madame: you may lose all if you hesitate, and I have but little time to spare."
  "Where do you go?"
  - "To assist in tracing the assassin and in finding the will."

"Whom do you assist?"

"Have you ever heard of Carlyle."

"Never."

"Well, he is your friend."

"If so, it is a mystery."

"Yes," replied Tom, reflectively, "it is a mystery."

Mrs. Drayton was lost in thought for several minutes.

The two walked on in silence, and Tom did not interrupt her meditations. At length she said:

"I may as well tell you all."

"Yes, madame."

"I was born in the State of New York, but at an early age my father went to California, and it was in the Golden State that I went to school, and where I grew to womanhood.

"My father was an enthusiast, a man who was always struggling to obtain a fortune at one bound, and he was constantly engaged in all manner of speculations.

all manner of speculations

"When I was about eighteen, my father made the acquaintance of an Englishman named Drayton. The latter was married to a lady whose father was a Spaniard, and whose mother was a Mexican.

'Mr. Drayton had one son, a handsome, cultured, and amiable youth, but a young man possessed of little firmness of character

- "I was just eighteen when I first met Henry Drayton, and he tell in love with me; and, to make a long story short, we were mar-
- ried.

  "My husband's father was not a rich man, but his grandfather—the Spaniard—was a very wealthy man, and when he died all his wealth descended to my husband, and we lived in splendor and
- My father, in the meantime, died. There were two men who My father, in the meantime, died. There were two men who had been associated with my father in his wild speculations. One was named Brinsmaid, and the other Sanderson; and after my father's death these two men presented enormous claims against my father, and made a demand of me for their payment.

  "I had no money of my own, and I told these men I could not pay the claims. They told me that I could influence my husband

to do so. I refused to ask my husband to pay my father's debts, and the two men swore vengeance against me

My husband was most excellent and lovable man, but he pos sessed one infirmity—he was exceedingly jealous, and as I learned later on, his jealousy, when once fully aroused, drove him to madness, and as previously intimated, he was not a man of strong char-

"One child was born to us—Margy—and she was but three years of age when these two men set to ruin me, and they succeeded." "How?" demanded Tom.

"How?" demanded Tom.

"Listen; my story is almost told. The two men set to work deliberately to separate my husband and I. They carried out a conspiracy, and convinced my husband of my infidelity. He made an assault upon me; in his madness he sought to kill me, but these men saved my life, and I fled.

"Six months I remained in hiding, and then I managed, with the aid of an old Mexican woman, to steal my child, and I came on to New York, and for a time lived on the proceeds of the sale of my jewels. The Mexican woman fled with me, but died a few years after our arrival in New York.

"I learned later on that my husband died, and in his anger cut off his wife and child with a mere pittance, a beggarly sum which

off his wife and child with a mere pittance, a beggarly sum which was sent to me through a advertisement; but since then, and within a few months, I have had reason to suspect that my enemies desired to gain possession of my child."

"Who is the woman who abducted Margy?"

"I have reason to suspect that she is the woman whom Brinsmaid and Sanderson used as a decoy to poison my husband's mind against me.

"And who is young Drayton?"

"A son of a cousin of my husband's father."

"And only a distant relative of your husband?"

"Yes; and his only living relative bearing the family name, save his own child.

He bears wonderful resemblance to your daughter."

"How do you account for the resemblance?"

"My daughter resembles her father. The resemblance to young Drayton is accidental."

"Do you know why Brinsmaid seeks to obtain possession of your child?"

"I suspect her father must have left a will."
"A conditional will?"
"Yes."

"I have every reason," said Tom, "to believe that your suspicions are correct."

"I did not suspect so," said the woman, "until I listened to your statement, and I suppose you have not deceived me."

"I have not deceived you. I will now tell you what I suspect," said Tom. said Tom.

The woman's face assumed an anxious look.

"I think the will provides that all the property shall go to your daughter in case she be living at the time of the testator's death."

"If it all goes to Margy, she is wery rich girl."

"It is my idea that the bulk of the estate goes to her, and in case she is not living it goes to young Drayton."

"That is possible."

"Yes, and I have reason to believe that your enemies are his enemies also."

enemies also.

enemies also."

"Why should they be his enemies?"

"Because he is a provisional legatee."

Tom had picked up considerable legal lore during his brief stay with Mr. Dugan, and for reasons of his own the lad had occupied his time studying up wills.

"I can not see why they should seek to put him out of the way."

way."
Yes, they must have obtained a great influence over your husband, and possibly there is a provision that in case young Drayton is not living, in some way the property is to accrue to the advantage of Brinsmaid and Sanderson."

Again for a few moments Mrs. Drayton was thoughtful, and at

length she said:

"It is possible. I never thought of that singular contingency; but I can see now how it may be possible."

"Will you tell me what makes you think it is possible?"

"Mr. Drayton, my husband's father, was engaged in several speculations with my father, and the men, Brinsmaid and Sanderson, may have made it appear to my husband that his father also was indebted to them."

"That is, indeed, a plausible that

was indebted to them."

"That is, indeed, a plausible theory," said Tom.

"It is a most likely theory,"

"I have one other suspicion," said Tom. "I think your husband made two wills. In the first will he made provision for the two men, Brinsmaid and Sanderson; and in the second will left the money to his child."

"What makes you think so?"

"The fact that Brinsmaid was anxious to get possession of a will that was in the possession of Dugan, and I am satisfied Dugan was murdered in order to secure the will."

"Then they have possesion of it?"

"I think not. I believe the murder, as far as the purpose was concerned, failed."

"And you know who has possession of the will?"

A moment Tom was silent, but finally said:

"It is possible the will may soon be in my possession."

Tom had secured all the points he required, and he returned with Mrs. Drayton to the house.

Mrs. Drayton to the house.

Margy was at the door awaiting their return, and as Tom's glance fell upon her fair face, clouded as it was with a look of anxiety, he thought her truly angelic in her beauty.

The girl had on a neat dress, and indeed she did look beautiful.

and a strange yearning feeling came over the youth; but no, he would conquer this feeling. His heart was up in his native village. There was a beautiful girl whom he hoped some day to claim in you and telumph.

The youth, seeing the girl with her strangely lovely face, said:

For a few days Margy must remain indoors."

Remember, the men who murdered Dugan, seek her life."
"They seek the life of my child!" ejaculated the mother.

"I fear they do."
"Oh, what do we not owe to you?"
"Never mind about what you owe to me. Be careful and watchful. Do not lose sight of your child, until you see me again."

#### CHAPTER XVIII.

Tom returned to the city and proceeded to the place where he was to meet Brinsmaid.

The man did not appear.

Tom waited for a long time and started to walk away, when a hand was laid upon his shoulder.

The youth turned and saw a stranger.

"Well, what do you want?" he asked.

The stranger spoke, and the lad gave a start and exclaimed:

"Why, it's you, Mr. Carlyle!"

"Yes, Tom; and I see your man did not show up."

"No, sir."

" No, sir.

"I did not expect he would."

" Nor I, sir.

"Nor I, sir."
"Tom, you must meet me at midnight."
"I will, sir. Where shall I meet you?"
The detective named a place.
"I will be on hand, sir."
Tom moved away, and had almost reached his home, when again a hand was laid upon his shoulder.
He thought it was the detective; but again he uttered an exclamation of surprise. He stood face to face with Brinsmaid.
"Mr. Brinsmaid!"
"Hush!" said the man.
"You were to meet me?"
"Yes, I am here. What do you want?"
"Yes, I am here. What do you want?"

"Yes, I am here. What do you want?'
"You have heard the news, sir?"
"No. I have been out of town, and just returned."
Tom knew that the man was a deliberate liar. He admitted having received our hero's message, sent several hours previously, and claimed that he had just returned from out of the city.
"Mr. Dugan is dead."
"Mr. Dugan is dead!" repeated the man.
"He was murdered."
"When?"
Last night."

"Under what circumstances?"
"Murdered in his office."
"Poor man! And have they caught the murderer?"
"No, sir."

"Have they a suspicion?"
"Have they a suspicion?"
"They arrested me."
"And let you go again?"
"I am only out on bail."
"Who went your bail?"
"A friend."

"I thought you had no friends in the city?"
"I have made one friend since I have been with Mr. Dugan."

"Who is he?

"At present I am not at liberty to tell."
"So Mr. Dugan is really dead?"
"Yes, sir."

"Tom, this is very unfortunate."
"Yes, sir; a very unfortunate affair."
"Particularly unfortunate to me, Tom."

"To you, sir?"
"He was my attorney."

"He held valuable papers belonging to me."

"I am afraid you will never recover them, sir."

"How can that be? His papers must remain intact."

"The papers were carried off by the murderer."

"Carried off by the murderer?" repeated the man.

"What object could he have in carrying off a few legal papers?"
"The police think he was murdered for those papers."
"What folly!"

"What folly!"

"They are seeking to discover, sir, who had any papers in Mr.

Dugan's keeping."

"How do you know?"

"I overheard a conversation among some detectives."

"Were any names mentioned?"

"Yes, sir."

"Whose name?"

"Yours."

"My name?" ejaculated the man.

" My name?" ejaculated the man.

"Yes, sir."
"Why, how could they mention my name? Did you tell about my business with Mr. Dugan?"
"No, sir: but they found some memoranda in his desk."
"What did they find?"
"A paper of strange import."
"Were any names mentioned besides mine?"

" Yes, sir.

"What names?"
"The name of Banderson was mentioned."

Mr. Brinsmaid fixed a startled glance on the boy.

Mr. Sanderson's name was mentioned?

"Yes, sir.

"Any other name?"

"Yes; a woman's name."

"Yes; a woman's name."

"Do you remember the name?"

"Pierce—a Mrs, Amelia Pierce."

Again the man gave a start.

"Any other names?"

"Yes, sir; the name of Drayton."

The man's face assumed a ghastly hue, and he fixed a piercing glance upon Tom.

"Who told you to tell me all this?"

Who told you to tell me all this?"

"No one."
"You swear?"
"No need to swear. Who would tell me?"
"There was a man spoke to you a little while ago?"
"Where, sir?"

"How do you know, sir?"
"I saw him"

"I saw him.

"You were watching me?"

"I was proceeding to the place where I was to meet you."

"I was proceeding to the place
"Ah, I see."
"Who was the man?"
"I don't know, sir."
"Who did he say he was?"
"I think he was a detective."
Brinsmaid actually trembled.
"You think he was a detective."

You think he was a detective?" he said.

Yes. sir.

"What makes you think so?"
"Because I have been dogged by all sorts of men all day."
"What did the detective ask you when he spoke to you?"
"He asked me what time it was."
"Nothing more?"
"No. sir."

"No, sir."
"What was his object?"
"Well, I can't tell; only he was sort of making sure I was Tom

Cary."
"Tom, you are poor?"
"Yes, sir; poorer than ever now."
"How so?"
"Those lost my position. The de "How so?"

"I have lost my position. The death of Mr. Dugan throws me on the town."

"Do you wish to enter my employ?"

"I don't know, sir."

"I will pay you well."

"What would you have for me to do, sir?"

"Lear give you employment."

"I can give you employment."
"Of what sort, sir?"
"Well, you can become my private secretary."

"I am open for a job, sir

"Tom, you can make two or three hundred dollars is a few

A moment Brinsmaid was silent, but finally he said: Can I trust you?

If I enter your employment, you can trust me.

"You can make plenty of money."
"I should like to make plenty of money honestly."
"You can make it honestly."
"How, sir?"

"By serving me."
"How can I serve you?"

"I told you Dugan was doing some business for me?"

"That he had valuable papers of mine in his possession?"

Yes, sir.

"I want to secure those papers."
"But his papers have all been carried away."
"Not all."

Not all, sir?"

"How do you know?"

"He had a secret place where he kept some papers."
"Did he, sir?"

"Tom, you are a rogue."
"Oh, no, sir." "You are playing altogether too innocent. You know he had

secret place where he kept papers.

"How should I know, sir?"

"You were his clerk."

"Only for a few days, sir."
"Yes; but all lawyers have a secret safe where they keep certain

papers."
Do they, sir?"

"Yes; and you know where Mr. Dugan kept his private

papers."
"How do you know, sir?"
"You were with him the night he was murdered."
"I was?"

"Yes, you were. And now, boy, I believe I could furnish the police information that would hang you."
"Oh, sir, what do you mean?" exclaimed Tom. pretending to be dreadfully frightened.

Mr. Brinsmaid smiled in a ghastly manner.
"Yes, I know you were in his office that night—last night."
"How do you know, sir?"

"I was watching.

I thought you were out of town?' I had some one watching for me."

Ah, you did?

Yes: and I have information, I think, that would hang you."

You think so, sir?'

Well, sir, I know that I have information that would hang

Mr. Brinsmaid leaped back aghast.

Fom laughed, and said

Do not try to scare me, sir."
What do you mean by your words?"
You know Mullane?"
No," answered the man.

"Oh, yes, you do, sir."
Did that scoundrel mention my name?"

" He signed a paper. "Where is the paper?"
"I know."

The man trembled like a frightened dog. "You know where the paper is, Tom? "Yes, sir."

"Yes, str.
"Tom, I see what you are after."
"Do you, sir?"
"Yes; you are smarter than I thought."
"Ah, thank you!"
"Now, what do you want?"
"I want you to tell me the truth."
"About what?"

You are after a certain paper. Tell me just the character of

the paper."

Brinsmaid was silent.

"I think, sir, we have no more to say," said Tom.

"You want me to put myself in your hands?"

"What do you know?"
"More than you think."
"Well, what do you know?"
"I know there is a will."
"A will?"
"Yes, sir."
"Whose will?"
"Tom did not answer.
"Whose will?" repeated the man.
"That's what I am trying to find out."
"You do not know?"
"I am trying to find out." What do you know?"

"I am trying to find out."
"Tom, I see all."
"What do you see, sir?"

"You are in with the detectives."
"No, sir."

"What are you doing?"
"Working m game of my own."
"For money?"

"You can make money."
"That's what I'm after."
Mr. Brinsmaid had one meaning to his words, and our little hero another, as our readers will learn as our narrative progresses.

"You can make big money.
"How, sir?"
"You know of a will?"
"Yes, sir."

"You know where the will is hidden?"

" I've a suspicion, sir

Again the man trembled.
"Secure that will, bring it to me, and I will give you a thousand

'But you must tell me more, sir."

"About what?"
"The will."

"What do you want to know?"
"I want to know why you are so anxious to get hold of the will?"

"I can not tell you that."
"You wish to get the will?"

"And you will pay me a thousand dollars for it?"

"Yes."

"When will you pay me the money?"

"The moment you place the will in my hands."

"Will you meet me to-morrow night?"

"And can I expect the will?"

"I can not say now; but will you meet me?"

"You are up to some game."

"You must trust me, if I trust you."

"Do you know where the will is now?"

"I told you I had a suspicion."

"Get it to night, and I will pay you two thousand dollars."

I can not get it to-night; but I will meet you to-morrow night."

"And then?"

"And then?"
"I will tell you just what I will do, sir, and name my price."
A few moments later Tom and Mr. Brinsmaid separated.

### CHAPTER XIX.

Our hero had played a very cunning part. He had been seeking to ascertain one point, and, to use a detective's expression, he had collared his clew.

Tom had established the point that Mr. Brinsmaid did not gain

possession of the will; and he had also established the fact, to he own satisfaction, that Mr. Brinsmaid had had a hand in the murder, directly or indirectly.

After the lad had parted from the suspected assassin, he hurried to the place where he was to meet Carlyle, the detective. The offito the place where he was to meet Carlyle, the cer was at the appointed place.

"Well, Tom, you are here," said Carlyle.

"Yes, I am here."

"You're late, my lad."

"Yes; but I was detained."

"By whom?"

"Richard."

"Brinsmaid."

The detective gave a start.
"You saw him?"
"Yes."

"When?"
"I left him but a few moments ago."
"Under what circumstances did you meet?"

" He overtook me.

"Aha! he was on the watch."

"That tells the tale, lad. He did not dare meet you."

"No, sir."
"Why not?"

"I have an idea."

"I have an idea."
"What is your idea?"
"I will tell you in good time."
The detective looked at the boy in a surprised manner, and repeated

You will tell me in good time?"

"Why not now?"

"I've a good reason."
"Did Brinsmaid know that you had met me?"
"Yes, he saw you speak to me."
"Did he know who I was?"

"No.
"Did you tell him?"
"I told him I thought you were a detective."
"Hang you for a lunkhead! I thought you were smarter than that, Tom!"
"I reckon you will find I ve been pretty smart when I get through."

Again the detective fixed a surprised look on the lad.

"What has come over you, Tom?"

"I've learned a thing or two since I've been in New York."

"Oh, you have?"

"Yes."

"Well, come, lad, you've something to say."

"I have

"Speak out."
"Mr. Carlyle, I've a good deal to say, and I've got this whole business down."
"What whole business, lad?"

"Can you take me somewhere—some place where we can talk matters over without any chance of being overheard?"

A moment the detective was thoughtful, but at length said. "Come with me, Tom."

The officer led the way to his own lodgings, and when the two was seated, he said.

were seated, he said:

"Now, Tom, open up."

"No, I came here for you to open up," said Tom, coolly.

"You did?"

"I did."

The description

The detective's face clouded, and he asked, in a peculiar tone: "Tom, has any one been coaching you?"
"Yes, sir."

"Who?"

"Mr. Carlyle, the detective."
"Well. I'll be hanged!" ejaculated the detective.
"It's true, sir; you taught me all the little points I've been play-

ing."
"What points have you been playing?"
"A good many."

"A good many."

"On what tack?"

"I'll tell you all on one condition: you must tell me just what your interest was in Dugan; why you wanted me to watch him. You must tell me just what your interest is in Brinsmaid, and why you set me on him. You must tell me just what your interest is in Sanderson, whom you never mentioned. You must tell me just what your interest is in the woman, Mrs. Amelia Pierce?"

The detective stared.

"Tom," he exclaimed, "where did you get those names?"

"Oh, I got 'em."

"Why did you not mention 'em to me before?"

"I was laying low and looking around."

"Now, boy, I want you to open up."

"Mr. Carlyle, I will not say one word until you answer my question."

question.

"What is your question?"
"I ask you what is your interest in those people?"
The detective made no answer and was thoughtful, when Tom:

"I can tell you a great deal more. I have been working in your interest, and I think I can find the will; and I think I can put my hand on the true heiress! So you had better take me into your full confidence."

The detective became greatly excited—an unusual incident. He caught hold of Tom, and demanded in a stern tone:
"Tom, explain yourself."
"I have explained a great deal, and I will say one more word.

and then I am a listener. What is your interest in Mrs. Drayton

and her daughter?"
The detective leaped from his seat again and a second time seized hold of Tom.

"Boy, what do you mean?"
"I have said enough. Now it's your turn, Mr. Carlyle."
"You are a wonder."

You are a wonder. Am I?"

Well, you will think so, if you will only tell me all. But, after all, it's only wonderful luck I've had."

Wonderful luck?"

- " How?"
- "In getting at the bottom of a great mystery through a series of

"Tom, I'll tell you all."
"Please do, sir."
"There was a man in California who had a lovely wife and child. Enemies made the husband believe the wife was a bad woman; they contrived to force her to flee from her husband. She fled, and afterward abducted her own child. The man made a will be the contribution of wife and child, but later on chanced his mind and made. cutting off wife and child, but later on changed his mind and made a second will, secretly bequeathing his fortune to his daughter, with provisional clauses in case of the child's death. Sanderson and Brinsmaid are interested in the first will; the second will cuts them off. They are seeking to find the second will, when they propose to offer the first for probate; but they can not find the second will. It is believed that Dugan knew of the second will; and they have also been searching to find the wife and child."

"I know all these facts."

"You do?"

"Who told you-Dugan?"

" No, sir.

The detective's face wore a puzzled expression. "Well, who did tell you?"
"I will explain later on. And now, my dear And now, my dear friend, will you tell your interest in this matter?"
"I am searching for the second will."
"And for the mother and child?"

"At whose instigation?"

"Well, you are progressing, boy."
"Yes, sir; but you do not answer my question."
"Mr. Drayton had a half-sister, a full-blooded Mexican woman."
"And she told you all the facts?"
"Yes."

Is she honest?"

"In the interest of the mother and daughter?"

"You are sure of her?" said Tom.

"I am sure of her?" said Tom.

"I am sure of her."

"She has not a little game of her own?"

"She has no little game of her own."

"Mr. Carlyle," said Tom, "you picked me up a homeless boy, and you became my friend. It was a good day for me, a lucky day for you." day for you.

The lad's voice trembled with emotion, and Carlyle was deeply

agitated.
"What have you to tell me, my son?"
"I have seen the will—the second will."

"You have seen it?"

" Yes.

"In whose hands?"

"In the hands of Dugan."
"When?"

"When?"
"The night I lay in wait in his office."
"Ah, it is as I suspected," said the detective.
"What did you suspect?"
"Dugan was murdered to obtain possession of the will."
"That is so, sir; but they did not get the will."
"They did not get it?"
"No, sir."
"How do you know?"

"How do you know?"
Tom related word for word his conversation with Brinsmaid.
"By George! The scoundrel failed after all!"

"And you think you can find the will?"

" Who has it?"

"I can not tell now." When will you know?"

"In a few days."

"And now, Tom, you said you could put your hand on the wife and daughter."

"I did, sir."

"What did you mean?"

"Mrs. Drayton and her daughter are under my protection."

"Mrs. Drayton and her daughter are under your protection?"

"Mrs. Drayton and her daughter are under your protection?"

exclaimed the detective in a tone of excitement greater than he had ever used under professional circumstances in all his life.

"Yes, sir, under my protection."

"Where are they?"

"Safe and sound where I placed them."

"No, sir."
"How did you learn all these facts?"
"In a most remarkable manner."
"Will you tell me?"

"I will."

Tom proceeded and told all the little incidents he had observed during his brief service in Mr. Dugan's office.

He told of the finding of the letter signed "Drayton."

Who wrote that letter?

A second cousin of Mr. Drayton."

"A second cousin of Mr. Drayton."

"A second cousin of Mr. Drayton."

"Who is the man?"

"I will explain; but first let me tell you all."

Tom related the contents of the letter, and then told how he had met a little beggar-girl on the street, and how he had resqued her from a man who was seeking to put her in a coupé.

The detective listened in amazement.

Tom continued his narrative, telling how, on the following day, a young man had called to see Mr. Dugan, and he told of the wonderful resemblance the visitor bore to the little beggar-girl, and how, incident by incident, he connected the latter with the will.

He told how he learned certain facts from Mr. Dugan's soliloquy, and related the full particulars of his adventures the night he watched in the office, only omitting to speak of the secret drawer.

He proceeded with his narrative, and told of his meeting with the mother of the little girl Margy Drayton; told of his bold entrance into the house of Mrs. Pierce; of his listening to the conversation between the woman and the man, and repeated the talk; told of his rescue of the girl and his carrying mother and daughter to a place of safety.

Indeed, he went into all the particulars, and Mr. Carlyle listened

in wonder.
When Tom had concluded, the detective said:

"Boy, you have made your fortune."
"I am glad to have protected and rescued worthy people."
"You do not know half that you have accomplished. And to-morrow you must take me to see Mrs. Drayton."

I will, sir

"Brinsmaid is the murderer, Tom."

"I think so.

"Mullane must have reported back to him."

"Yes, sir."
"And he returned and murdered Dugan himself." "That is my idea, sir

"He feared to let Dugan hold the paper Mullane had signed."
"Yes, sir." "You would know Mullane if you saw him again?"

"Yes, sir."
"We will capture Brinsmaid."

"He is a bad man.

"Yes; and he is the assassin.'
"How about Sanderson?"

"Sanderson is not the guilty man. I have the points in that direction; I have been piping Sanderson. And now, how about the will?"

"I think I can find it."

"If you do, you win a fortune for the proper heirs."
"I am not sure, but I think I can find it."
"Where?"

I will not tell now."

Why not?

Because I can not get at the place."
You wish to gain admission into Dugan's office?" said Carlyle.

"Yes, sir."
"You shall."

"When?

"To-morrow."

"I must go alone."
"You shall."

"You shall."
"It must be kept quiet. No one must know."
"Certainly not. And now, Tom, you remain here until morning, and to-morrow you take me to see Mrs. Drayton."
At daylight upon the following day the detective aroused Tom.
"Come, my boy, we must be moving."
"Not in company, sir."
"Why not?"
"Stripsmaid grow he on the watch."

"Brinsmaid may be on the watch."

you. I shall follow you."
"That is all right. When do we start?"
"At once." "Tom, you are a born detective! I did not mean to go with

Tom was in the street later, and after having sat down to a good breakfast with his friend, he proceeded to the ferry and crossed to where the mother and daughter were harbored at his expense.

A few moments later he was in the room with them when an elderly man was shown in.

The detective had adopted a disguise. He was introduced to Mrs. Drayton, and the two had along talk.

Later on Tom and the detective returned to the city. Tom went to the officer's lodgings, and Carlyle went to make certain arrangements.

ments That same night, accompanied by Carlyle, Tom went to Dugan's

An officer was at the door. The youth presented a card and was admitted into the office and locked in while the officer stood on

guard on the outside. A moment the lad stood lost in thought, and all the startling incidents attending his brief sojourn in the city passed through his

mind.

"Mine has been a wonderful experience," he said; "a most wonderful experience!"

He spent but a few moments, however, in retrospection. He had the spent but a few moments, and momentous interests hung. entered that office for a purpose, and momentous interests hung upon the success or failure of his enterprise. It was to be the crowning act of all his adventures.

#### CHAPTER XX.

Tow had thought he could find the secret nook and open it without difficulty, but when he came to search for it he found himself

He tried and tried, but the fire-place appeared to be all solid brick, and nowhere could he find one that was loose.

"I could not have been dreaming," he said. "I certainly saw a brick removed

He continued his search, going over each brick, but not one could

he find that he could move or that appeared to be loose.

"Hang it!" he said. "Will I have to give it up as a bad job?"

He renewed his search, when suddenly an idea struck him.

He made a close study of the bricks in the arch, fell at length to

the mystery, pulled out the loose brick, and the secret aperture lay open to his gaze.

open to his gaze.

The lad thrust his hand within, and with a thrill of delight felt a box; the latter he drew forth, and after feeling inside for any loose papers, he replaced the brick and stole forth from the place.

Carlyle was waiting for him.

"Did you succeed, Tom?" asked the latter, in an anxious tone.

"I don't know. We will go to your house, and in a few moments I can tell you."

The two proceeded to Carlyle's residence, and once in the detect-

The two proceeded to Carlyle's residence, and once in the detective's private room, Tom produced the box. The latter was locked and there was no key, but it did not take the detective a moment to pry it open, and a lot of papers were exposed.

Carlyle's eyes danced as he seized upon the papers, and he re-

Carlyle's eyes danced as he seized upon the papers, and he remarked:

"Tom, I reckon you've made your fortune."

"I hope so, sir," said Tom, quietly.

Carlyle looked over the papers, and at length came upon one document which he spread open and began to read, while Tom stood by with an anxious look upon his rugged but handsome face.

stood by with an anxious look upon his rugged but handsome face.

The detective carefully read over the document, and as he proceeded the color on his face deepened, and his eyes grew brighter and brighter, and at length he said, in a solemn voice:

"Tom, what do you think?"

"I'm done thinking for the present," said Tom,

"My dear boy, let's hug!"

"Will you not tell me, sir?"

"Yes, Tom, it's the thing!"

"The will!"

"You have the will, sir?"

"You have the will, sir?"
"Yes."

"The second will?"
"Yes."

"The one that brings a fortune to Mrs. Drayton and her child?"

"Yes, Tom."
"Well, sir, I am thankful. We will go right over and impart

the news. "No; we will not go yet, Tom."
"Why not?"
"We have business on hand."
"What business?"

"We must eatch Mr. Dugan's murderer."

"You are right, sir."
"You are to meet him to-night, Tom."

The lad shuddered as a chill went over his frame.
"You shuddered, Tom?"

"Yes, sir."
"Why?"
"I do not know."

"Are you afraid of that man?"
"No, sir."

"Then what is the matter?"

"It seems like betraying him. He has given me his confidence.

He murdered your friend."

"Let him go.

"Let nim go.
"Let a murderer go, Tom? a cold-blodded assassin! Why, my dear boy, the safety of Mrs. Drayton and her child depends upon the catching of the assassin of Dugan. The murderer is her implacable enemy, and may murder her and her child, if not caught."

"I will aid in his capture."
"Now you talk like a man. You have made no pledges to the rascal?"

No, sir."

"Tom, listen to me. I do not know where you are to meet him."

"I can tell you, sir."
"You need not. But listen: you can warn him."
"How, sir?"

"Tell him plainly that he is suspected of the murder."
"And he will escape! No, he must not escape."
"Tell him more, Tom. Tell him you have the will."

"Tell him more, Tom. Tell him you have the will."
Tom looked surprised.
"Yes, tell him that, and I guarantee you will not regret betraying him, as you call it."
"It is not a betrayal, sir?"
"No, it is not a betrayal. It is handing a cold-blooded murderet ever to justice. But, Tom, mark me, when you tell him you have the will, look out."
"For what, sir?"
"Your own life."
"What do you mean, Mr. Carlyle?"
"I wish you to know what a criminal he is, so that you will never feel any regret when the gallows day comes."

"When he is executed?"

"Can you prove him to be the murderer?"

"I think so."
"It's terrible!" muttered Tom. "Well, we shall see. Now you go meet him, and leave all the rest to me."

Tom went forth and reached the trysting-place, but saw nothing of Brinsmaid. He had waited and waited, and at length concluded that the man had scented danger, and he started to go away when "Your name is Cary?" said the party who had stopped Tom.
"Your name is Cary?" said the party who had stopped Tom.
"What business is it of yours who I am?"
"You came here to meet a gentleman?"
"How do you know what I came here for, my friend?"

"I was sent here to meet you."
"By whom?"

The gentleman whom you were to meet."
Who was I to meet?"
You know."

"Do you?"
"Yes."

"I don't believe it."
"I do."

"What is his name?"

"It commences with a B."
"That won't do."

"The gentleman is sick."
"Sick?"
"Yes."
"Well?"

"He wants you to come to his house."

Tom was taken aback, but at that moment a woman brushed by. Tom had not seen her before, and would not have noticed her had she not stumbled right against him, and as she did so she whispered the one word:

The youth was amazed. As the detectives say he tumbled. The woman was Carlyle in disguise.

The gentleman wants me to go to his house?"

"It's very strange."

" How strange? "You say he is sick?"

"He has well enough last night."

"He can not come."
"He can not come."
"Tell me where he lives and I will go to his house."

"No, you must go with me."
"You are a stranger to me."
"It matters not. I have made myself known."

"I've made my business known."
"Does the gentleman live far from here?"

"And you will lead me there?"
"Yes."

"Can I take a friend?"

"No; you must go alone."
"All right, I'll go."
Tom was a lad brave to rashness, and not a nerve quivered as he followed the man, though fully impressed with the idea that treachery was intended.

The man walked along with our hero without the exchange of a single word. They had walked for some time when Tom said:

'I thought Mr. Brinsmaid lived near by?'

'We have not proceeded very far.'

'Libiak we have.'

"I think we have."
"Well, here is the house,"
Tom was shown into a respectable-looking house, and in the rear parlor stood Mr. Brinsmaid.

parior stood Mr. Brinsmaid.

The house stood alone, as our hero had observed as they approached it—not another house being within half a block, though several were in the course of erection.

"Well, Tom, I could not meet you to-night."

"So your messenger said."

"Well, what have you concluded to do?"

"What do you want me to do?"

"Enter my service."

"I can not do that."

"You can not enter my service?"

"You can not enter my service?"
"No, sir."
"Why not?"

"I have another chance which suits me better."
A moment the conspirator was silent and thoughtful; but Tom could observe that he was restless inwardly, as betrayed by the quick motion of his wicked eyes.

"Can you get the papers, Tom?"
"I have the paper."
"What paper?"
"The will."
"Whose will?"
"Mr. Drayton's."
The man's ever hunged with an

The man's eyes burned with an eager light. "You have the will?"

"In your possession?"

"How did you come to get it?"
"I knew where to look for it." "What do you know about Mr. Drayton?"

- "I know his history."
- "You do?" " I do.
- "And what does all this mean?"
  "That is for you to say."
- "Ah! you want me to buy the paper?"
  "I do not want you to buy it."
  "What do you desire?"
  "Nathing."
- " Nothing.
- "Why are you here?" "I came at your request."
  "Ah! you did?"
  "I did."

The man struck his two hands together and two men entered the mom—one of them was the messenger who had led Tom to the house

- "Arrest him!" said Mr. Brinsmaid in a severe tone.
  "Arrest me?" exclaimed Tom.
  "That is my order."

- "Why do you arrest me?"
  "To hang you, young man. You are too smart to live."
  "And you think you can hang me?"
  "Yes."

- "You're crazy. No judge will hold me."
  Brinsmaid laughed.
  "I'm your judge," he said, "and you will be executed in the cellar of this house. In plain language, you will be strangled like
  - Tom did not show any fear, but coolly answered: "I guess not."

  - "You die within ten minutes."
  - "I guess not."
  - set a trap for you. I had you brought here to kill you."
  - "Murder me?"
    "Yes."
  - "I guess not."

Tom was, as stated, cool as a cucumber, and Mr. Brinsmaid was

- "Are you prepared to die?"
  "I guess not."
  "Seize him!" said the man.

The two fellows, who were great, burly men, laid hold of Tom.

- His hands were bound, and a rope was placed around his neck.
  "Say your prayers, Tom Cary," came the command, in a stern
- "Not till I go home and to bed."
  "You think I am trying to scare you?"
  "No. I think the murderer of Mr. Dugan would not nesitate to murder me."

  - "The man turned pale.

    "You can save your miserable life on one condition."

    "I guess not!" came the answer.

    "Surrender the will."

    "I guess not," said Tom.

    "Strangle him!" came the command.
- At the moment the door opened and two armed men entered the "Hold on!" cried Carlyle. "What's going on here?"

The two men who had seized Tom gazed in fear and trembling, and Mr. Brinsmaid demanded:
"Who are you?"
"We are officers," came the response.

- "Officers!"

- "Yes."
  "What brings you here?"
  "What brings you here?"
  "We are looking for a man named Brinsmaid."
  "Why do you seek him?"
  "Why do you seek him?"
  "The are here to arrest him as the murderer of a ghastly hue. "We are here to arrest him as the murderer of John Dugan."

  Mr. Brinsmaid's face assumed a ghastly hue.

  "On whose testimony?" he asked.

- "The testimony of one Mullane, who has been arrested, and who
- Mr. Brinsmaid passed his hand to his mouth, and said, in a calm
- voice:
  "My name is Brinsmaid."
  "You are my prisoner," said Carlyle, and he stepped toward his
  "You are my prisoner," said Carlyle, and he stepped toward his
- "Hold!" cried the latter. "I am here, I can not escape, do not place your hands upon me for a moment, I wish to ask a few questions.
  - Carlyle came to a halt, and said: "Speak, sir."

  - "Who set you to track me?"
  - "It matters not.
  - "I am prepared to confess on one condition."
    "Name your condition."

  - "Tell me the truth; is Mullane a prisoner?"
    "No." Now listen: I did murder Dugan, and no other
- "I thought so. Now listen: I did murder Dugan, and person had anything to do with the assassination."
  The man's countenance began to assume a leaden hue.
  "You must make your confession officially."
  "I will never make it officially. Your name is—"

  - Have you found Mrs. Drayton and her child?" " I thought so.

  - "Thought so. Have you round arts. Project data."

    "That does not concern you."
    "It does. Listen: in my safe you will find some valuable papers
    "regularly drawn confession of the whole conspiracy."

    Carlyle stared in amazement.
- "What I say is true, and you will never arrest me!"

- As the man spoke, he fell back into a chair, and the detective ran forward and bent over him.
- The man was passing into a convulsion, but he had strength and

- "It is better for him!"

  The man was passing into a convulsion, but he had strength and mind enough to say:

  "I will be dead in three minutes. That boy has done the whole business for you and settled me!"

  There was an awful hush in that room, and the man told the truth. In three minutes Brinsmaid was dead, and Carlyle remarked, in a solemn voice:

  "It is better for him!"

#### CHAPTER XXL

Our readers have little interest in what followed the death of Brinsmaid as far as the assassin and conspirator was himself concerned.

- A week subsequent to the man's death, Tom Cary and Carlyle, the detective, were in the rooms of the latter.

  "Tom," said the detective, "to-morrow I start with Mrs. Dray-
- "Tom," said the detective, "to-morrow I start with Mrs. Prayton and her daughter for California."

  "So I understand, sir."

  "She is not in possession of her estate, but in good time you will be munificently remunerated for your services."

  Tom remained silent.

  "In the meantime you are to be provided for. I am directed to pay to you one thousand dollars."

  "I will not take it, sir."

  "You will not take it, sir."
- - "You will not take it?"
    "No."

  - "Why not?"
- "It is time enough to pay me when Mrs. Drayton comes into pos session of her fortune.
- "Listen, my lad: this does not inconvenience her in the least, and you shall take it. And I've other information for you. An
- intimate friend of mine, a prominent lawyer, will take you into his office.
  - Tom's eyes glistened.
    "I think I heard you say you desired to become a lawyer?"
    "Yes, sir."
- "Yes, str."
  "You will receive an annual payment of a thousand dollars."
  "Sir! I will not be worth that amount to any one."
  "Do not look a gift horse in the mouth, Tom; take all that
- On not look a girt horse in the mouth, for; take all that comes. You have earned more than you will ever receive; and now that ends the matter."

  That same day Tom received his thousand dollars, and was introduced to the gentleman with whom he was to study law, and the next day he bid good-by to Mrs. Drayton and her daughter and his friend Carlyle.
- Tom had been in constant receipt of letters from his mother, and the day following the departure of his friends he received one that filled his heart with delight.

  His mother wrote and told him that at last she was a happy woman. Her husband had become a reformed man. "And this

- His mother wrote and told him that at last she was a happy moran. Her husband had become a reformed man. "And this reformation, my dear son," she wrote, "is genuine, and your father desires that you pay us a visit."

  Tom had only been six weeks from home, although it seemed like six years to the gallant lad.

  He wrote back to his mother, telling her he was rejoiced to hear about his father, but it would be impossible for him to visit his old home until some months later, as he had just entered upon his duties in a new situation. duties in a new situation.
- Tom had only told his mother a part of what had befallen him since his departure from his home and arrival in New York.

  A few months passed, and Tom received another letter from his mother, saying that they would be compelled to surrender the farm, but that she would do so cheerfully, adding, "I have lost a farm and found a husband."

  Tom received permission to revisit his old home.
- and found a husband."

  Tom received permission to revisit his old home.

  He did so, carried with him fifteen hundred dollars, which he gave to his father to settle the mortgage which had come due.

  The lad remained two weeks at the farm, and during that time failed to see his little lady-love with whom he had exchanged vows at the time of his flight from home. The girl was away visiting friends during our hero's visit to his home.
- Our hero returned to the city and resumed his studies, and at the winter term entered as a pupil in Columbia Law School.

  A year passed, and he received a letter from his mother, telling him that the Snell family had become very rich and had gone to
- The news made Tom very unhappy. Jenuie Snell was at the time a girl of nearly fifteen, and Tom thought she might have sent him just one little word; but no—she had gone, and had not left even a poor good by.

- even a poor good by.

  Tom received an occasional letter from Carlyle. The detective had remained in California, and although his letters were kindly, he gave the lad no positive information as to what had occurred in the fortunes of his whilom friends in the Golden State.

  Meantime the lad continued his studies, and was making rapid progress as a student. He had grown to be a tall, handsome fellow, and by close study had become well educated.

  Five years passed by, and Tom was now a man. He spent his twenty-first birthday at the farm in company with his mother, and the latter was the proudest woman in the State as her eyes rested upon her stalwart son.

  Tom had been admitted to the bar, and had been promoted to the position of managing clerk in the law firm with which he had studied; and during all these years he had remained faithful to his first love, Jennie Snell.

  He occasionally heard of the family through allusions to Miss Snell in the papers, and sometimes would run across a friend who

had met the young lady in Europe, and he learned that she was one of the reigning American belies in gay Paris.

Tom had been so sincere in his vows he did not for a moment doubt the sincerity of Jennie. And one day he read with delight an announcement of the arrival of Mr. and Mrs. Snell and their daughter in New York.

Towards to be a whore they were storying and their daughter in New York.

Tom determined to learn where they were stopping and call upon

Tom determined to learn where they were stopping and call upon them. He felt himself quite a man of consequence, and he believed he was the social equal of any one in the land.

A day or two passed, and Tom watched the hotel registers, and at length recognized the names of the Snells at a fashionable hotel.

Tom was really a handsome fellow, and dressed like the gentleman that he was, he proceeded to the hotel and inquired for Miss

He sent up his card, and was, later on, secorted to a private par-

The young man's heart was in his throat. All the years of his study Jennie Snell had been the day-star that had wooed him forward to extraordinary exertions. It had never entered his mind that she could be false, and he had hugged the fond dream that, as he shought of her, so all through the years she was thinking of

He trembled with sweet anticipation as he entered the room and his eyes fell upon a fashionably dressed young lady, rather pretty, and quite cool and self-possessed, as she proved herself a moment

laer.

Tom had grown into a tall, heavily whiskered man, and, as he cossed the threshold, he actually sprung toward the fair girl. The ltter drew back, and motioning him away, said, in coldest tones:

"I beg your pardon, sir."

"Jennie!" cried Tom, "do you not recognize me?"

"I see, from your card, that you are Tom Cary, the step-son, I believe, as I remember, of old James Riddle."

There was no further need to wave Tom back. He fell back. He was still as bright as, when a lad, he had done such wonderful detective work and he said. detective work, and he said:
"Yes, I am Tom Cary."
"I wouldn't have known you, Mr. Cary," said Jennie. "How do you do?"
"I am Profit work."

I am pretty well-what there is left of me."

"When were you up home?"

"When were you up home?
"Some six months ago."
"You are doing well, Mr. Cary?"
"Yes, quite well. I am a lawyer."
"A lawyer? Dear me! Who would ever have thought that
Tom Cary would be a lawyer?"
"You have lived some time abroad, Miss Snell?"
"Yes. We have been abroad nearly five years."
"How are your father and mother?"
"Outstand theak you. And as ma is waiting, Mr. Cary, I

"How are your father and mother?"

"Quite well, thank you. And as ma is waiting, Mr. Cary, I will ask you to excuse me. Of course I could not refuse to see you, as you were so kind as to save me from a good wetting once. Ah, no! I did get wet well. If you had not pulled me out of the water, I might have taken a severe cold. Yes, I gratefully remember your exertions, Mr. Cary, and will always be glad to see you when I go up to the old homestead."

"Thank you," said Tom, and he rose to depart.

He waited just one moment to learn if Jennie had anything to say; but she was mute, and Tom left the room.

"Thus vanishes the dream of years," he muttered as he reached the street.

the street.

Tom was a stoic and a sensible fellow, and he took in the situation at a glance.

"She will be sorry some day," he muttered; and that was all he ever said of the dream of years that had vanished.

Upon the following day Tom sent by mail the little token that

Upon the following day Tom sent by mail the little token that had been exchanged between himself and Jennie Snell.

There had been no scene and no allusion to the little incident that had occurred the night he had run away from home.

A week following the incident we have recorded. Tom was sitting in his office, when a gentleman entered and advanced toward him with extended hand, at the same instant exclaiming:

"This is Tom, and I know it!"

"Mr. Carlyle!" exclaimed Tom.

"That's my name, my boy. And how are you?"

"I'm all right, and I'm a lawyer. Do you bring me a case?"

"Well, we can't tell what may happen, my lad; but you must call and see me to-night. Come up to the hotel. I am here with my wife and daughter, and you must become acquainted with wife and daughter, and you must become acquainted with

"Married?" exclaimed Tom. "Yes, married. Any harm in it?"
"And you have a little daughter?"
"Yes, sir-ee! But come up to night."

Tom was delighted to hear of his old-time friend's return, and

Tom was delighted to hear of his old-time friend's return, and delighted to have seen him.

That evening Tom proceeded to the hotel. He was ushered upstairs and shown into an elegant suite of apartments, and a few moments later was joined by an elegant-looking lady.

The face seemed familiar, and suddenly it came over him, although five years had passed, and he exclaimed:

"Is it possible, Mrs. Drayton?"

"Yes, Tom, it is Mrs. Drayton."

"Madame, I am delighted to see you. And you have come on with Mr. Carlyle?"

"Yes, I came on with him."

"And have you seen his wife?"

A moment later and a lovely young lady entered the room-one of the lovellest girls Tom's eyes had ever rested upon. The girl came toward him, and in a familiar tone exclaimed:

"Mr. Cary, how do you do?"
Tom colored and betrayed considerable confusion.
"Do you not remember me?"

Tom was powerless to reply.

"Is it possible you have forgotten little Margy, the little beggargirl, who owes so much to you?"

"Is it Margy?"
"Yes, it's Margy."
"Ah! I see all," said Tom. "Yes, I see it all. You are Mrs. Carlyle." "What!" exclaimed mother and daughter.

"Am I mistaken?"
"Why, mamma," exclaimed Margy, "he thinks I am papa's

"Papa's wife!" exclaimed Tom, aghast.
"Yes; don't you know? Didn't papa tell you? Mr. Carlyle is my papa now, and a dear, good papa he is, too. I love him ever so much." so much."

Tom began to see through the whole scheme, and passed his con-

gratulations around in a very handsome manner

Carlyle appeared in the room a few moments later, and explana-

tions followed.

The Draytons did not get possession of their own until two years after their departure from New York, and throughout the whole affair Carlyle had been their fast friend, and had aided more than any one else in gaining the suit that followed the production of the second will.

A day or two preceding the incidents we have described, Carlyle said to Tom one day:

"Tom, I have not much time to spare, and I wish you would come up and beau the ladies around a little."

Tom agreed to act as their escort, and finally upon one occasion

Mrs. Carlyle stated she was not well, and Tom must take Margy

Tom did so, and after that it was Margy and Tom who went alone, until one day the two were riding in the park and Margy spoke of an excursion for the following day.

"I can not go," said Tom, abruptly, and in a peculiar tone.

"Then the day after, Mr. Cary."

"No. nor the day after."

"No, nor the day after."

There was a peculiar significance in Tom's tone, and the girl asked, quickly:
"What is the matter, Tom, have I offended you?"

"Then what is the matter?"
"Shall I tell you?"

"Tell you fairly and frankly?"

"I can't stand it any longer."

"Stand what?"

"Going around with you."
"Am I such a monster?"

"Am I such a monster?"
"No; you are such a siren."
"Well, will you please explain?"
"You're mean, Margy."
"Why am I mean?"
"To force me to speak out, so you can laugh at me."
"Laugh at you, Tom?"
"Yos."

"Yes."
"Never!"

"Margy, here it goes. I love you."
"Why, of course you do, Tom. I expected you to love me, and I've loved you ever since that night you first rescued me on the

Tom was the happiest man in New York.
That evening he had an interview with Carlyle, and the detective

said:

"Of course, Tom, I expected you to marry Margy."
Tom told of his affair with Jennie—told it as he had told it to Margy—and Carlyle said, in his usual off-hand manner:

"Well, Tom, all's well that ends well."
Tom and Margy were married, and their wedding-tour took in the old homestead where Tom was born.

The years rolled by, and after Tom had been married ten years he appeared one day at a fashionable summer hotel with his little family. At the time he was looked upon as one of the rising lawyers of the State, and he and his wife were considered among the handsomest couples in society.

At the dinner-table Tom saw a face that seemed familiar.

handsomest couples in society.

At the dinner-table Tom saw a face that seemed familiar.

Later, on the piazza, a lady approached him.

"How do you do, Tom?"

"Jennie!" exclaimed Tom.

"Yes, it's Jennie."

Tom could be excused for not recognizing in the dried-up prettiness his old-time love, and when he saw her husband, a manthrice her age, and learned that she had married him for his money and that he had none and had really lost all her fortune in speculation, his heart filled with pity for her misfortunes; but as his eyes fell upon his own lovely wife, and he remembered all, to his lips rose the song: rose the song:
"Thank God!"